

TV ADDICTS!

NEWS OF *THE CLONE WARS* TV SHOW!



A LONG TIME AGO

THE YEAR THAT BROUGHT *SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE*



GIRL POWER!

MARIS BROOD MEETS ASAJJ VENTRESS

STAR WARS[®]

INSIDER

**CELEBRATING
25 YEARS OF JEDI!**

*Insider's Unique
Visual Commentary*

FX WIZARD!

Ken Ralston on his
Galactic Career

VILLAINS

**MATTHEW WOOD ON VOICING GRIEVOUS
IN *STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS*!**

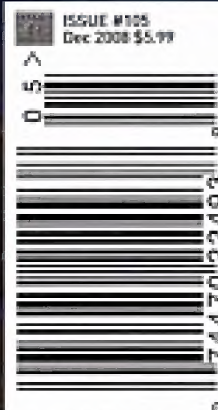
**THE FORCE
UNLEASHED!**

Adrienne Wilkinson
on Bringing Life
to Maris Brood

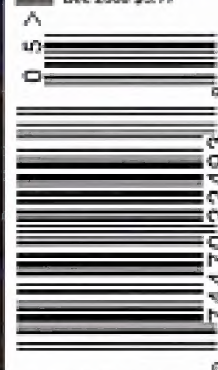
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COVER 2 OF 2



ISSUE #105
Dec. 2008 \$5.99



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DOCKING BAY

THIS ISSUE....

"SOUND THE ALARM, WE HAVE STOWAWAYS ON BOARD!"—GENERAL GRIEVOUS

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General Grievous is making a comeback in the animated TV series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. Behind the voice of this major *Star Wars* villain is voice artist, actor, and Skywalker Sound employee Matthew Wood.

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The visual effects wizard discusses his start on *Star Wars: A New Hope* in the ILM miniature and optical effects shop.



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Obi-Wan Kenobi faces off against General Grievous in Episode III. Only one can walk away.





INSIDER'S WELCOME

"I will not be made a Separatist bargaining chip!"

— Padmé Amidala, "Destroy Malevolence"

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By now the secret is out! Although the wait was longer than expected, the much anticipated ground-breaking Star Wars videogame *The Force Unleashed* arrived in September, revealing important new story elements of the Star Wars saga.

Not simply a game—although it can be played that way just for amusement, of course—*The Force Unleashed* adds new details to the Star Wars story that we all thought we knew. Pivoting around several previously unknown characters, *The Force Unleashed* not only gives us Vader's secret apprentice, but also reveals his previously unsuspected role in the establishment of the Rebel Alliance.

It'll be enough to make you drop your controller in shock!

The wider Expanded Universe of Star Wars is rich in characters, not all of which will have made an impact on fans whose core interest is the movies and, now, the animated TV series. Star Wars is a narrative that is forever expanding, allowing a character like General Grievous—rather short-lived in Episode III—to live on and have new adventures in novels, graphic novels, TV episodes and, yes, videogames.

It can work the other way around, as well. A character from an Expanded Universe source can easily later be found in the visual media versions of Star Wars (as happened to Aayla Secura and others). Grievous is a case in point: his first appearance was in the original *Clone Wars* cartoon micro-series before he was seen in all his CG majesty in Episode III.

Grievous is about to enjoy an afterlife, in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. New stories will be told and new facts learned about him and many more characters in this ongoing weekly series of TV adventures.



RETURN OF THE JEDI: 25 YEARS LATER

JUMP to page 16 for our visual commentary on the final Star Wars movie, *Return of the Jedi*.

This issue, Matthew Wood—the voice of Grievous—speaks about how he won the role and how he's approaching the character in the animated TV series. Adrienne Wilkinson, who portrays another new character—the deadly Maris Brood—again from *The Force Unleashed*, also talks to *Insider* this issue. We're also looking at *Return of the Jedi*, upon its 25th anniversary, in a light, new way through our exclusive visual commentary. There's much more in these pages, exploring the continuing lively legacy of Star Wars. Enjoy!

Brian J. Robb

Brian J. Robb, Editor



LAUNCH


ALL THE LATEST NEWS, FUN, GAMES AND GOSSIP FROM THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE

CLONES INVAD THEATERS!

The theatrical release of *The Clone Wars* proved to be a hit with audiences as Anakin Skywalker's first adventure with his new apprentice, Ahsoka Tano, got a new style of *Star Wars* adventure off to a fine start.

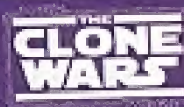
Familiar voices such as Samuel L. Jackson (Mace Windu), Christopher Lee (Count Dooku), Matthew Wood (battle droids) and Anthony Daniels were joined by new cast members for the movie that preceded the TV series that started on October 3 on the U.S. Cartoon Network and in the UK on October 25 on Sky.

The movie had a Los Angeles benefit premiere, attended by George Lucas, Dave Filoni and members of the cast. Lucas told the media: "When I did *Revenge of the Sith*, I lamented over the fact that I couldn't do anything about the Clone Wars because they didn't really have anything to do with Anakin. I thought it would be great to be able to do something a little more open."

Fans in London enjoyed a special screening introduced by the irrepressible Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), flanked by members of the 501st. 

FACT

This is the only *Star Wars* movie not to open in May.



STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

INSIDER'S INSTANT GUIDE TO THE FIRST SIX EPISODES!



1: "Ambush"

Great leadership comes in all sizes. Challenged by Ventress, Yoda leads three clone troopers against a huge droid army.

Director: Dave Bullock
Writer: Steve Melching

2: "Rising Malevolence"

Belief is not a matter of choice, but of conviction. The Jedi face a devastating new Separatist weapon.

Director: Dave Filoni
Writer: Steve Melching

3: "Shadow of Malevolence"

Easy is the path to wisdom for those not blinded by ego. Anakin leads a strike on General Grievous' warship.

Director: Brian Kibbe
Writer: Steve Melching

4: "Destroy Malevolence"

A plan is only as good as those who see it through. Padmé and C-3PO are caught in the middle of a space battle.

Director: Brian Kibbe
Writer: Tim Burns

5: "Rookies"

The best confidence builder is experience. Rookie clones must fend for themselves against a Droid Commando invasion.

Director: Justin Ridge
Writer: Steve Melching

6: "Downfall of a Droid"

Friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, impossible to forget. R2-D2 is lost in battle.

Director: Rob Coleman
Writer: George Krstic

PAD

FACT

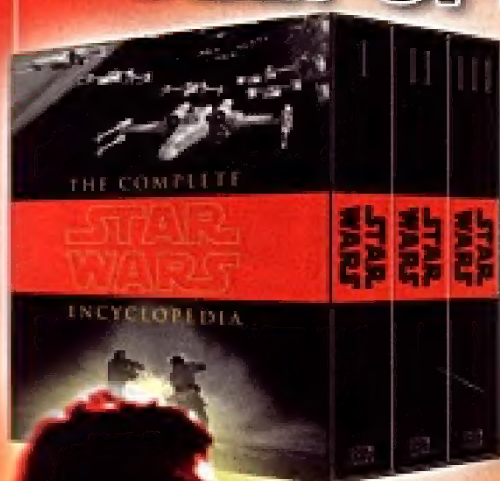
The film is due for release on DVD and Blu Ray on November 11.



FACT

This is the only *Star Wars* movie not to include the phrase: "I have a bad feeling about this!"

ENCYCLOPEDIA: FULLY OPERATIONAL AT LAST!



Details have been unveiled of the 1,224-page, three volume *Complete Star Wars Encyclopedia*, due out this Winter. *Star Wars Insider's* very own Stephen J. Sansweet, author of the original *Star Wars Encyclopedia* has been joined by Pablo Hidalgo (*Star Wars Chronicles: The Prequels*), Daniel Wallace (*The New Essential Chronology*), Mary Franklin (*Bantha*

Tracks), Josh Kushins (Lucasfilm Publicity Manager), and Chris Cassidy (*Star Wars Adventure Journal*) for the project.

Also contributing to the book is Bob Vitas, best known for his comprehensive database *The Completely Unofficial Star Wars Encyclopedia*.

StarWarsShop will be offering signed copies for those who pre-order the book, which will be released by Del Rey on December 9. 🗓️

JEDI SCHOOL!

The UK's first Jedi course is on offer at Queen's University Belfast in November. According to publicity, the course 'Feel the Force: How to Train in the Jedi Way' teaches the "real-life psychological techniques behind Jedi mind tricks."

It also claims to examine the "wider issues behind the *Star Wars* universe, like balance, destiny, dualism, fatherhood and fascism."

Dr. Allen Baird, the course leader, said he hoped this approach would attract younger people to open learning. 🗓️



UNLEASHED!

SECRET APPRENTICE - FINALLY REVEALED!

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed hit stores worldwide the third week of September. The long-awaited release of the "next chapter" in the Star Wars saga was accompanied by a novel, a comic book adaptation and myriad toys, making the game a truly multi-media event!

With positive reaction to the game on its various formats, the release was heralded by a recording breaking first-week sales for any Star Wars game title.

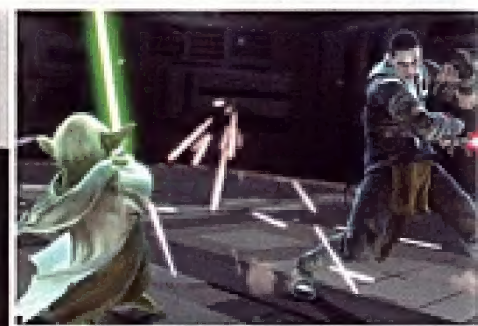
BOOK MAKES HISTORY!

It wasn't just the videogame version of The Force Unleashed that proved to be groundbreaking. The official novelization of the game, written by Sean Williams, made history by being the first book based on a videogame to top the *New York Times* bestsellers chart following its publication on August 21! 🌟



THE NAME'S MAUL.... DARTH MAUL

Videogame fans checking out the new *Quantum of Solace* videogame might find 007's moves a little familiar. While James Bond's face and voice is provided by Daniel Craig, his moves were motion captured from Darth Maul himself, Ray Park!



A DIFFERENT CALIBUR

Videogame fans enjoyed a sneak preview of the secret apprentice in action in *Soul Calibur IV*. The character, who can be unlocked by beating the game as Darth Vader (PlayStation 3) or Yoda (Xbox360) is featured along with a Star Wars stage, an Imperial hangar bay. The games also featured John Williams' *Duel of Fates*, first heard in Episode I.



REMOTE CONTROL & ON THE MOVE....

In a very busy year for videogame fans, another *Star Wars* themed game is scheduled for release on November 11—in two versions for two different platforms. *Star Wars The Clone Wars: Lightsaber Duels*, created exclusively for the Nintendo Wii, features an intuitive motion-controlled combat system that gives players the chance to wield a Wii Remote like a lightsaber. The game features characters such as Anakin Skywalker, General Grievous, Ahsoka Tano, and Asajj Ventress—each with a unique fighting style and set of skills to master. Also for sale on the same day is *Star Wars The Clone Wars: Jedi Alliance* for the Nintendo DS. The game gives players the chance to pair a variety of Jedi Masters and Padawans in the battle against the dark side. As the game progresses, players experience the combined power when two Jedi join forces to fight as one by using the game's innovative stylus-based input. There's also a story line unique to the DS.

STAR WARS THE FORCE UNLEASHED

LAUNCH PAD



REVENGE OF THE SETHS!

Seth Green and Seth MacFarlane just can't seem to get enough Star Wars. We expect Green's *Robot Chicken* to do a second all-Star Wars episode this season and MacFarlane to do an *ESB* follow-up to his *Family Guy* Star Wars parody sometime next year.

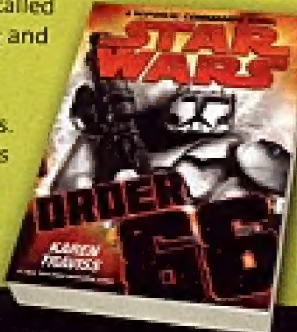
DEL REY PROMISES EVEN MORE STAR WARS!

Del Rey has retained the contract to publish *Star Wars* books with 35 novels and 10 non-fiction books expected over the next few years.

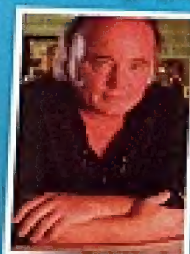
Nine of the novels will be part of the new *Fate of the Jedi* series, which will be published at the rate of three books a year.

In a departure for the franchise, these will be released entirely in hardcover. Aaron Allston's series opener will be called *Outcast*. Troy Denning and newcomer Christine Golden will also contribute to the series.

Elaine Cunningham's standalone paperback *Blood Oath* will be released in April 2009.



EFFECTS MASTER HONORED!



Oscar winner Phil Tippett has been named recipient of the George Melles Award for Artistic Excellence at the seventh annual VES Awards, next February 21 at the Century Plaza in Century City.

The award honors individuals who have "pioneered a significant and lasting contribution to the art and/or science of the visual effects industry by way of artistry, invention and groundbreaking work." Tippett, the former head of the creature shop at Industrial Light & Magic, was part of the team that created the stop-motion Imperial Walkers in *The Empire Strikes Back*. He won a special achievement Oscar for *Return of the Jedi*.

STAR WARS

DECEMBER 2008

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RETURN OF THE JEDI AT 25

INSIDER VISUAL COMMENTARY

STAR WARS
RETURN OF THE JEDI

JUMPIN' JEDI

IT MAY BE 25 YEARS OLD,
BUT *RETURN OF THE JEDI* STILL
HAS MANY SECRETS TO OFFER.
INSIDER PRESENTS A VISUAL
COMMENTARY ON THE MOVIE
THAT CLOSED OUT THE FIRST
STAR WARS TRILOGY IN 1983.

WORDS: DAN WALLACE

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Each of our iconic photos from *Return of the Jedi* contains a wealth of detailed information, both visually and as pointers to Expanded Universe tales and behind-the-scenes anecdotes. As a different take on *Return of the Jedi* for its 25th birthday we're dissecting some key images to see what secrets may be revealed.



The script's rough draft opens with a shot of Had Abbaddon, Lucas' original name for the galactic capital: Endor is simply the "Green Moon," a nature-preserve satellite orbiting its urbanized primary.

The Star Destroyer *Avenger* releases Vader's shuttle—you might remember it as ill-fated Captain Needa's vessel from *The Empire Strikes Back*.

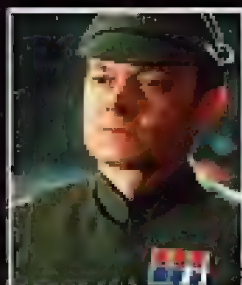
Though unfinished, the second Death Star measures 900 kilometers in diameter.



Jabba's iron citadel has been established in Expanded Universe sources as the former domain of devout B'omarr monks. In the animated movie *The Clone Wars*, Anakin Skywalker and Ahsoka Tano infiltrate a similar-looking B'omarr fortress on Teth to rescue Jabba's son Rotta.

Jabba's penchant for lounging while smoking a hookah calls to mind the caterpillar from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

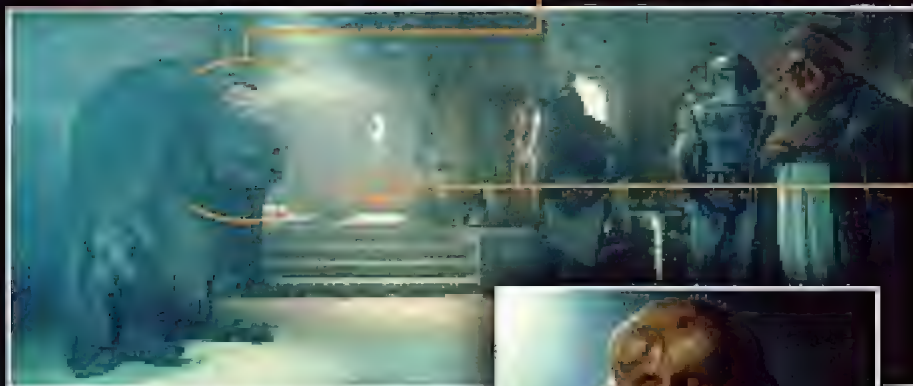
Developed in two full-day sessions, Equity Issues is focused on the Equity-Related Data in the Transparency report. Research helps build P&G resources when integrating the findings and measures with internal operations and objectives.



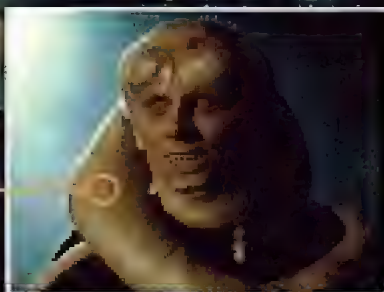
A costuming error left every Imperial officer in the movie with the same uniform insignia regardless of rank, including Moff Jerjerrod.

Footage from this scene was reused for the Special Edition of *The Empire Strikes Back*, placing Jerjerrod aboard the Super Star Destroyer Executor when Darth Vader returns from Bespin.

To the left of the slab is Hermi Odie, a Baragwin weaponsmith who escapes the destruction of Jabba's sail barge in his Expanded Universe biography. To the right is an Amaxin, his gruesome staff decorated with shrunken heads; in the comic *Star Wars Empire*. To the *Last Man*, a legion of Imperial troops is overwhelmed by a horde of angry natives on the Amaxin homeworld.



In the rough draft, Bib Fortuna is described as the "High Beeser of Hoth." Based on his appearance in *The Phantom Menace*, Bib Fortuna has served Jabba the Hutt for over three decades.





Director Richard Marquand provided the voice for sadistic supervisor droid EV-9D9, in the *Return of the Jedi* radio adaptation. Yeardley Smith (also the voice of Lisa Simpson) played the role. EV-9D9 is sometimes shortened to "Eve," which is also the name of a much more benign female robot in 2008's *WALL-E*.

Sy Snodgrass, a long-shouted Pa'lowick, received a digital makeover for the Special Edition that removed the boar-like tusks present on the original red-puppeteered marionette. Glimpses of the original Snodgrass can be caught during wide shots.

Jabba's articulated puppet measured 18 feet from head to toe and required six operators, who controlled everything from the twitching tail to the movements of Jabba's collar eum.

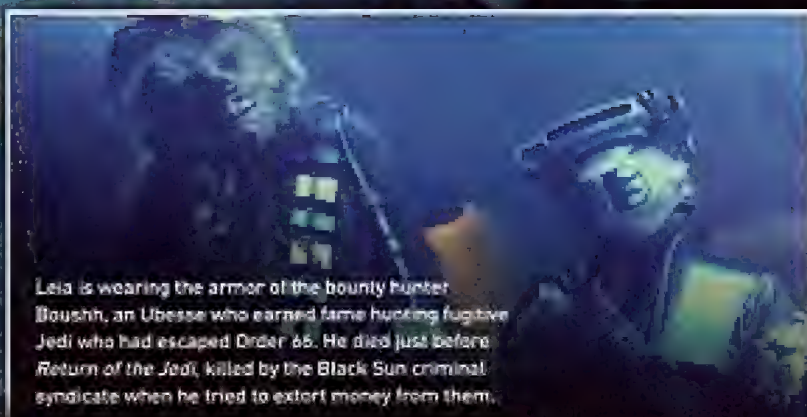
Rystall Sant is an alien hybrid born to a human mother and a Theelin father. Lando Calrissian rescued her from slavery at the hands of Prince Xizor prior to her employment as a back-up singer.

Following a childhood rescue, Lolo became obsessed with Boba Fett and swore revenge on Luke Skywalker after his rescue plan seemingly resulted in the bounty hunter's death.

After Jabba's death, Greata Jendowanian joined Rystall and lead singer Joh Yawza to form the band The Palpatones; she and Rystall are both present at the Galactic Opera House in *Revenge of the Sith*.



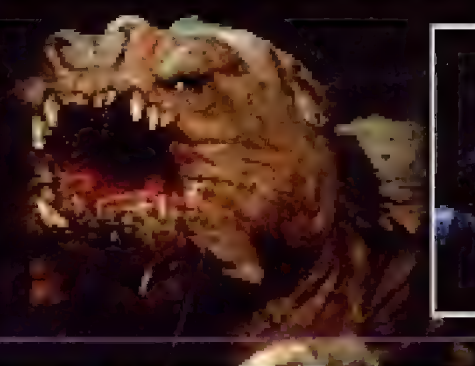
The diving microphone is a modified remote, similar to the device Luke used to practice his lightsaber skills in *A New Hope*.



Leia is wearing the armor of the bounty hunter Boushh, an Ubese who earned fame hunting fugitive Jedi who had escaped Order 66. He died just before *Return of the Jedi*, killed by the Black Sun criminal syndicate when he tried to extort money from them.

Jabba's fearsome rancor was an 18-inch puppet made of foam latex. Shot against a miniature set, its movements were played back in slow motion to create the illusion of a massive beast.

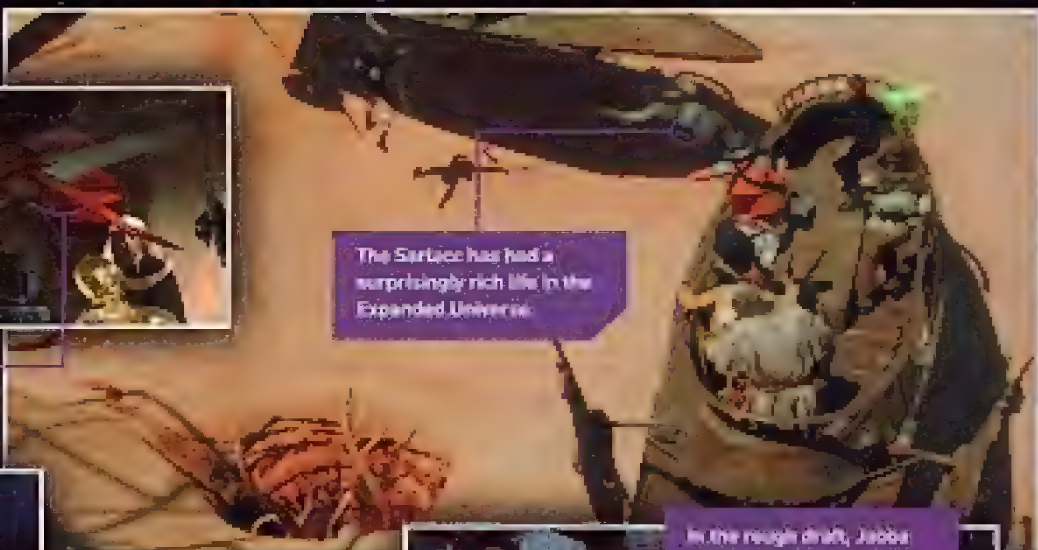
This unlucky Gamorrean is Jabba's, who squeals like a piglet when caught.



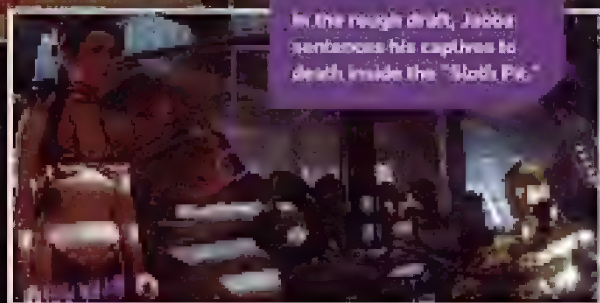
This snail-like creature is a *Wet Cabasshite*, an intelligent species that communicates via magnetic fields. This *Wet Cabasshite* is named *Ghoel*; other members of the species have included Jedi Master *Ono Bourli*.



The *Sarlacc* has had a surprisingly rich life in the *Expanded Universe*.

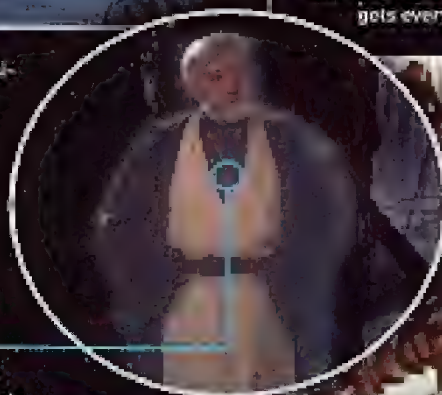


In the rough draft, *Jabba* sentences his captives to death inside the "*Slab Pk.*"



A single grain of sand clogged the hydraulic mechanism that operated the *Sarlacc's* tentacles, while more blowing sand penetrated the film magazines. As *Anakin Skywalker* puts it, "I don't like sand. It's coarse and rough and irritating and it gets everywhere."

Dagobah's trees are quasi-animalistic creatures called *gnarltnes*, with root systems that are mobile, spider-like predators during their seedling stage.



In the novelization of *Return of the Jedi*, *Obi-Wan* says that he and *Owen Lars* are brothers, a fact that has since been overturned by the prequels.

Corellian corvettes are compact, 150 meter long ships dominated by their engines and their guns. Also known as *blockade runners*, they reappear in *Return of the Jedi* for the first time since *Princess Leia's Tantive IV* roared on screen in *A New Hope*.

Two *blockade runners* are seen in the *Return of the Jedi* *Expanded Universe* novel. One is a *Corellian Corvette*, and the other is a *Blockade Runner*. The *Corellian Corvette* is a compact, 150 meter long ship dominated by their engines and their guns. Also known as *blockade runners*, they reappear in *Return of the Jedi* for the first time since *Princess Leia's Tantive IV* roared on screen in *A New Hope*.



The *Mon Calamari NC80 star cruiser Home One* is the flagship of the *Rebel Alliance* fleet. Its lumpy, pickle-shaped contours are hallmarks of *Mon Cal* design, and all such vessels were originally engineered as non-combat passenger liners.

The *Galliofree Yards GR-75 medium transport* is a non-combat vessel used to ferry goods from one location to another. At the *Battle of Endor*, transports were loaded with explosives and locked onto collision courses with *Imperial* vessels.



The lower shaft leads directly into the Death Star's hypermatter reactor.

The scene was originally scripted with Vader Force-choking the Royal guards when they blocked his passage. In the comic *Tag and Bink Were Here*, the two protagonists—disguised as these same guards—obey the Emperor's "leave us" command only to discover that there's no exit on the opposite side of the elevator shaft.

The Emperor's tower is located at the Death Star's north pole.

During a costume fitting, Harrison Ford commented that his character should wear a Western-style duster coat, an idea quickly made a reality. The Rebel parkas in this scene are simply white lab coats painted to match the forest background.

The Rebels received a C-3PO for their mission. Chewbacca, at the moment, was in the movie, and in the Rebel position.

Before shooting this scene, crewmembers spotted a massive loose branch (dubbed a "widowmaker") precariously balanced 70 feet above the ground. Loggers had to be called in to remove it before actors were allowed on the location.

Leia remembers her birth mother as "beautiful but sad" in this scene, an accurate description of Padmé (but a precocious one, considering Leia's age at the time of Padmé's death). The novelization also has Leia recall "distorted visions of running... a beautiful woman... hiding in a trunk."

In the rough draft, medicine man Lobot inspected Leia's eyes, ears, and teeth before accepting her as a member of the Ewok tribe.

The Ewoks wear hoodresses largely to conceal the costume seams at the backs of their heads.

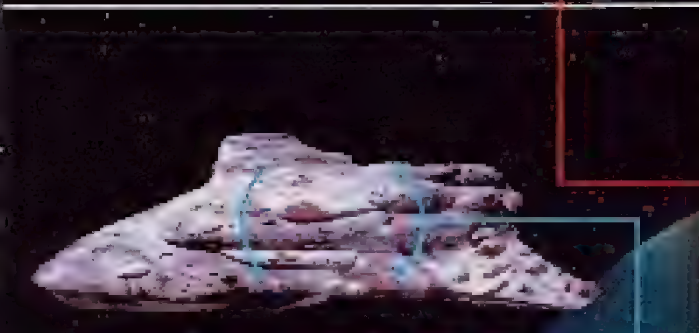
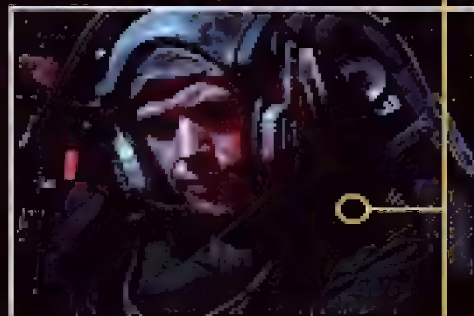
To achieve the effect of Paploo holding on for dear life, the crew stood the speeder bike on its rear and shot Ewok actor Kenny Baker as he dangled vertically from the handlebars.

Mostly used for reconnaissance, the Aratech 74-Z speeder bike can go as fast as 500 kilometers per hour.



The original version of this confrontation took place in the Emperor's throne room on the capital of Had Abbaddon, far below the planet's surface in a cavern of lava and fire. Ralph McQuarrie made several illustrations of this hellish realm.

Green Leader Arvel Crynyd is the pilot of the out-of-control A-wing that rams the bridge of the Super Star Destroyer Executor. The New Republic later named a captured Star Destroyer in his honor.



The first vessel destroyed by the Death Star's superlaser is the HSSB Mon Calamari star cruiser Liberty. A New Republic Alliance-class heavy cruiser built during the Black Fleet Crisis was named in honor of the first vessel.



The Executor's cannons will be destroyed during the battle, but the ship will remain in the command of the Empire. The Executor's full name is the Admiral Doomsday Executor, and the "Doomsday" is a reference to the "Doomsday" of the planet.



The Avenger, also seen at the start of the film, acts as a communications ship during the fighting; it escapes intact and serves Imperial Military Executor Sedriss during the Battle of Balmorra.

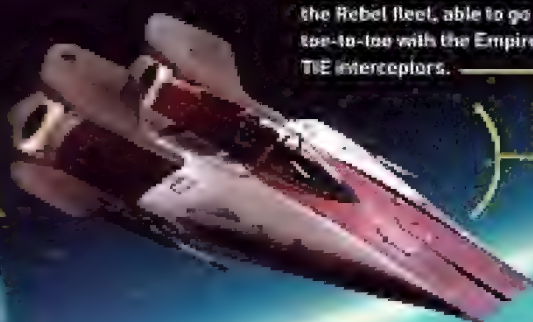
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The Endor ground battle involved 130 Imperial troops (most of them local loggers), 40 Ewoks, 150 additional cast and crew, and cost more than \$100,000 each day. During filming, a tree accidentally caught fire due to sparks from a special effects explosion.



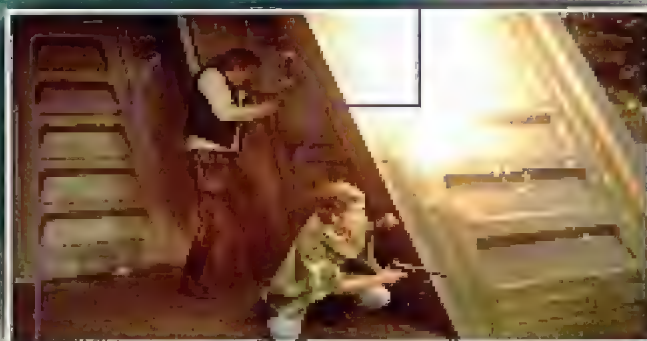
Green Group's A-wings are relatively new additions to the Rebel fleet, able to go toe-to-toe with the Empire's TIE interceptors.



Co-producer Robert Watts plays an AT-ST gunner. Director Richard Marquand plays the driver. The name of the AT-ST is Sewul Walker Seven.

The unlucky Colonel Dyar is played by actress Abi Doria, a sound engineer. Bob Burt, who also played a Melian character in *The Phantom Menace*, had a short holding up over the falling walk added by Burt as one example of the famous "Wubba lubba dub dub" sound effect.

In the rough draft, Han attempts to yank the bunker doors open with a cable attached to his captured AT-ST. Instead, he tears the scout walker in half.

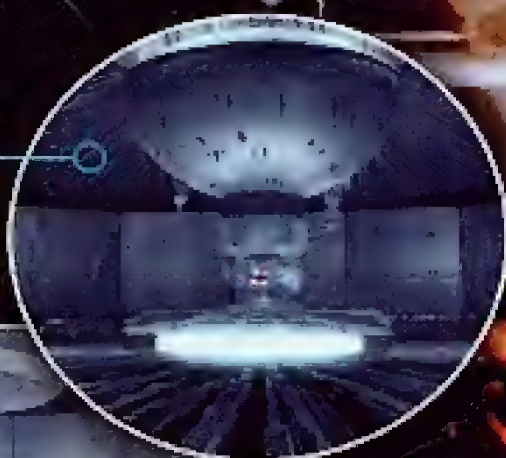


The charge is a Merr Sonn Munitions T-PRG proton grenade; it contains a highly volatile proton core.

In the novelization, Han takes breaking into the bunker to an adventure in which he and Chewbacca raided the spice vaults of Gargon.



The radiating shafts surrounding the Death Star's reactor core were actually 1500 fishing rods.



Vader's memorial was a last-minute addition. The Jedi funeral pyre is revisited in *The Phantom Menace* after the death of Qui-Gon Jinn. Assuming Anakin Skywalker disappeared into the Force upon his death, Luke is merely burning Vader's armor.

Despite rumors to the contrary, Lando and the *Millennium Falcon* survived the Death Star explosion in all versions of the Jedi script, according to starwars.com.



The T-16 Skyhopper is a small, single-seater spacecraft that appears in *A New Hope* and *Return of the Jedi*. It was designed by John Wood and is a popular fan favorite.

Although Luke plays with a T-16 model during *A New Hope*'s garage scene, the *Return of the Jedi* Special Edition marks the only time a Skyhopper is seen in flight.

SCIENCE OF

THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION

The concept of artificial gravity is such a common feature of science fiction that we almost don't notice its presence. Every spacecraft and space station in the *Star Wars* galaxy seems to have this wonderful technology, allowing characters to safely walk around on spaceships in apparent contradiction of the laws of physics. There is gravity in space—the pull of any body, whether it's a star or planet, decreases exponentially the further away you are, but it's not something you could rely on while traveling through a star system or in hyperspace.

So, is it possible that artificial gravity could be developed one day to give real astronauts an easier life in space? The honest answer is that no one really knows because of all the forces in physics, gravity is the one we understand the least.

Fundamentally, there are only four types of force in the universe: the strong and weak nuclear forces, electromagnetism, and gravity. Of these four, gravity is by far the weakest. It's many times less powerful than electromagnetic force, and you can demonstrate this for yourself with a steel pin and a magnet. Even though the entire gravitational pull of the Earth wants to keep the pin on the table, a tiny magnet can

overcome this force with ease and lift it off the table. Physicists studying gravity are working for a breakthrough. Projects are now underway to detect theoretical gravity waves or radiation. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) is one of the most ambitious and expensive projects ever funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation. It has been searching for proof of cosmic gravity waves since 2002, as predicted by Einstein's Theory of General Relativity (developed in 1916).

At the two LIGO observatories laser light is bounced up and down 2.4 mile long tunnels and analyzed by a sensitive device called an interferometer. A gravity wave passing through the Earth is predicted to distort the length of the tunnel by less than one thousandth the diameter of a proton, but this should be detectable by the interferometer.

In six years of operation however, not a single gravity wave has been detected, and the breakthrough that will improve our ultimate understanding of gravity is still elusive. In the meantime if astronauts wish to be steady on their feet in space, they would have to make do with a artificially-created gravity, only available to current science by living within a spinning ring—a luxury which isn't planned by any of the space agencies. ☹

NOT QUITE AN ION CANNON

It may not be at the scale of planetary defense yet, but U.S. company Raytheon's latest energy weapon, the Laser Area Defense System (LADS), was recently displayed at the Farnborough International Air Show in the U.K. It uses solid-state 50 kilowatt lasers to

blast incoming mortars and other munitions. It works by rapidly heating incoming ordnance and causing them to explode before impact. No date has been given for when this technology could be protecting troops on the battlefield, though. ☹



WHERE REAL WORLD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MEETS STAR WARS FANTASY 🌟 WORDS: DAVID HAWKSETT

STAR WARS

ANYONE FOR MARTIAN ASPARAGUS?

As Uncle Owen would tell us, there is no point in having a habitable planet if it is impossible to grow anything on it. The latest revelation from NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander has changed our impressions of how difficult it could be to one day grow food on the red planet. Analysis of the Martian soil by previous missions, including the Viking landers of the 1970s, led to the conclusion that it was too salty, too acidic, and just too chemically nasty, with horrid bleach-like qualities. However, Phoenix has shown that,

actually, the chemical nutrients are there in enough quantities that alkali-loving plants such as asparagus, beans, and turnips could one day flourish on Mars. With the recent discovery of water on Mars, can Martians produce be that far off? 🌟



THAT'S HANDY

Having had a hand lopped off no less than three times, Darth Vader would no doubt be pleased to hear of the latest developments in artificial hands. The i-Limb Hand has just been fitted to its latest recipient, 17-year-old Sean Daniels, from Maine, who lost his arm in a farming accident. Hailed as the world's first fully articulating artificial hand, the i-Limb uses electrical impulses from the patient's residual limb and converts them



into signals that operate the hand, including the fingers. It might even allow them to wield a lightsaber, if so desired. 🌟



NOT REINVENTING THE WHEEL

So far, the closest thing we have to the anti-gravity repulsorlifts that float Luke's landspeeder is magnetic levitation, or maglev. Trains using maglev are already in operation in Shanghai and other locations around the world but, in June 2008, President Bush authorized \$45 million for research into a maglev train that could one day connect California and Nevada. This high-speed train, suspended above its track by magnetic fields, could travel at up to 310 mph, giving a friction-free and utterly smooth ride. It's as close to a landspeeder as we're likely to see in our galaxy! 🌟



The background of the page is a vibrant blue and green space scene. Several Jedi starships, resembling the ones from the Clone Wars, are flying in formation. A bright green lightsaber is visible in the lower left corner. The overall aesthetic is dynamic and action-oriented.

GRIEVOUS ALARM

Words: Amos Wong

General Grievous was a major character in Episode III and he's making a comeback in the new animated TV series, *The Clone Wars*. Behind the voice of this major *Star Wars* villain is voice artist, actor, and Skywalker Sound employee Matthew Wood.

Wheezing and coughing his way onto our screens in Genndy Tartakovsky's Clone Wars micro-series, General Grievous proved to be the break-out villain of Star Wars: Episode III, *Revenge of the Sith*. As the General once more stalks our television screens in *The Clone Wars*, Insider talks to the new voice of villainy, Matthew Wood. The story behind the General's unique vocal styling is a surprising one: Skywalker Sound employee Wood auditioned anonymously and won the role, beating out a host of other applicants.

How did you become involved with *Star Wars*?
I started at what was then called Lucasfilm Games in 1990 as a videogames tester on games like *Monkey Island*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, and *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe*. Skywalker Sound was interested in some of the techniques that I used for logging any bugs we found, for a program that George [Lucas] was putting together called Sound Droid. It was a digital audio-editing tool for film. My dad had bought me a Macintosh really early on, so I had some practice loading digital audio into a computer and manipulating it. Those things just came together: my quality assurance work on games, as well as my love of computers and filmmaking. I got the job over at Sky Sound about a year later, and we developed the technology for *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* TV show. I worked my way through the ranks at Sky Sound, and now I've supervised all of George's movies since Episode I.

"A lot of [the coughing] you hear is actually George Lucas! When we were recording this character, he had a really bad cough!"

How did that segue into acting?
I've always loved acting through high school. I was acting in plays. I'd always tried to continue doing some form of acting, whether it was community theater or my local college. I took a small break from Sky Sound right after Episode II and enrolled in a program in San Francisco called American Conservatory Theater. I did a really intense program there, and it gave me a lot more confidence in my acting skills. I had done some voices in Episode I and played a cameo as Bib Fortuna.

There was an audition process on Episode II for the lead villain, General Grievous. I was involved in the technical part, putting together how the character was going to sound. On one of the last batches of submissions a friend was sitting with me and he said "You should put your own voice in there." We had [already] gone

"Most bad guys have a deep voice, so I really had to go guttural. George said something about Bela Lugosi and vampires, so I used some of that Eastern European thing."

direct actors. When he wasn't getting something, I got to hear what it was that he did want. [I was able to] come up with what I thought he was looking for, and it turned out to be right. The character was going to be barking out orders, because he's a general. Historically, most bad guys have a deep voice, so I really had to go natural. Also, I had just been in Prague; George had said something about Bela Lugosi and vampires, so I used some of that Eastern European thing. That's where it all came from.

Where did the wheezing and coughing come from? I think what George was trying to illustrate there was the fact that he was bio-mechanical, that he was not just completely a droid. He had a vulnerability, with his bio-mechanical parts. It illustrates [Grievous] has the same kind of issues Vader does with breathing.

Fun! Enough, a lot of what you hear is actually George Lucas! When we were recording this character, he had a really bad cough! I'd run through these really long lines and I'd lose my

through 30 or 40 voices and George hadn't picked one yet, so I could tell [producer] Rick McCallum was getting a little nervous. It was coming up to the final animation where IAA needed to finish the character, and the voice was the last thing they were waiting for.

I anonymously put my audition in there, which I wouldn't have done without the confidence of a lot of my acting work and George picked it. He was actually quite excited when he found out it was me. He came by the next day and we recorded the whole performance. Episode III opened some doors for me in the acting world, so I was able to get agents in San Francisco and Los Angeles. I do as much voice work as I can in between working on sound postproduction at Skywalker. With the new animated series, I hit it off with Dave Filoni, the director, so I'm supervising the audio portion of that project, as well as voicing several characters for him.

Can you talk about those characters?

The obvious one is General Grievous. I voice all the battle droids for both the movie and the series. There's other characters that are yet to be revealed [that I voice] in the series as well.

What was the overall directive you received on General Grievous' voice?

The one advantage I had, being at the company and observing the casting process, is that I got to hear George

breath or I'd cough. George would say, "That's good. Let's keep that and move on." I didn't realize what he was going for. At the end of the session, George went up to the microphone and coughed, and I recorded it. We processed them all and sent them to his digital editing machine up at the main house, and he peppered those coughs all around the performance. I share those coughs with George! I thought that was really funny.

One advantage you had was seeing the almost finished animation before doing the voice.

One of the advantages of working with such a great visual effects company is they have so much of the animation done already, so you really get to see what you're working on early. For sound, it's great, too, because it helps me as far as what sounds I choose for a scene.





Some Star Wars fans are fascinated by the mythical elements, others love the technology. Watching as a member of the audience, what fascinates you the most about Star Wars?

The thing I really like about the Star Wars movies is the fact that you can watch them over and over again and always find something new. George really packs so much information into the movies. One thing about working on films is that I have to watch them hundreds of times when I'm working on the sound in post-production. With a simpler film I'd get sick of it in the first 10 viewings but with Star Wars, I worked on each film for over two years and I'm still interested. I like that about them, it almost feels as if he doesn't have enough time to tell all the stories, there's so much information compressed in there.

As a kid I remember just being so impressed with the technology involved in making movies. It was the first time ever that I really gave attention to that—how amazingly well made the original trilogy was—so I really aspired to be part of that. When I started working at Lucasfilm, I was in awe of all the artists I was working with, and the legacy of what had come before. It really was inspirational to keep that level of technical detail and excellence up. It was two-fold for me: I loved the story and I loved the actual making of the film.

How do you feel about the longevity of Star Wars and its continuation in other media like comics, novels and games?

I worked on a lot of the videogames doing voice work, and actually for a while there Dave Acord, my co-sound designer, and I were playing the Star Wars Galaxies game while working on the re-release of the trilogy on DVD in 2004. So we were working on Star Wars all day and then we'd go home at night, get online and play each other in Star Wars Galaxies [laughs]. We had a blast doing it, but we realized that we were going kind of insane, on the thing that wasn't paying us, which was the videogame! I like that it's expanded into so many other different mediums and it usually carries quality with it, too, which is impressive.

To what do you attribute Star Wars' long life and success?

I think that a lot of the stories are attached to common myths that have been tweaked to the setting of sci-fi. That has a universal appeal, like the Joseph Campbell power of Myth underpinnings. The classic battle of good versus evil just really lasts.

How important have the fans been in prolonging Star Wars?

I work at Skywalker Ranch and it's a fairly isolated location; we're out in the middle of nature 10 or 15 miles away from anything, really. When we work on these films I have the extra benefit of having appeared in front of the camera, too, so I get to meet fans and have direct contact. I get to take that back with me to work and have that energy with

me. It actually really helps in driving me to do the work and do a really good job. So the fans have obviously been the complete driving force, keeping this going generation after generation, thus allowing Lucasfilm to make products that appeal to a younger audience as well. Just look at The Clone Wars TV series. I think that a whole new audience is going to enjoy it, too, so that's exciting.

Do you have a favorite toy of your character?

When I went to Mexico to do a show, somebody had made a miniature Greivous in a little bottle. Like a ship in a bottle. I don't know how they did it, but it was pretty funny. Then there's the amazing Sideshow Collectibles figure, the one that is really well detailed—it's really impressive. I get to see all the toys because all the fans bring them to have them autographed, so I have my finger on the pulse of what's out there. I do have some stuff, but there are so many things with Greivous that I haven't collected them all. I'm sure my mother would like me to, but I haven't yet! ☺

"You can watch [the Star Wars movies] over and over again and find something new. George really packs so much information into them."

A LONG TIME AGO.... 1996

1996 REAL LIFE WORLD NEWS

FEBRUARY 10:

Overlaid on the Internet, the company developed and was added to ILM's digital character manager. They showed for the first time. Over time would go on to be a major success story.

MAY 10:

A fierce storm hit Mt. Everest, killing eight climbers. Four more climbers also died in May storms, making it the worst disaster in Everest history.

JULY 5:

A team at Scotland's Roslin Institute clones Dolly the sheep, the first mammal cloned from an adult cell.

NOVEMBER 5:

Bill Clinton wins his campaign for reelection, defeating challenger Bob Dole for the Presidency of the United States.

FIRST STEP INTO A LARGER WORLD

NOVEMBER 1996

STARWARS.COM LAUNCHES

Star Wars staked its claim in cyberspace with the 1996 launch of StarWars.com, providing fans with an online portal into the galaxy far, far away. The site was initially quite sparse, with facts about the classic trilogy films and a printout coloring book for kids. StarWars.com deepened as interest grew for the upcoming Special Editions, with the multi-part online video series "Anatomy of a Dewback" providing a groundbreaking peek into ILM's work on updating the classic trilogy. During the making of the prequels, StarWars.com was the exclusive source for set reports, behind-the-scenes photos, and live webcam shots from Fox Studios in Australia. Today, the site attracts around two million visitors every month.



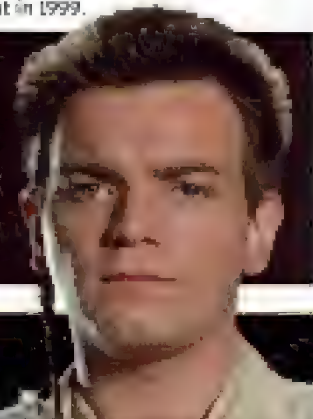
THE X-WING SERIES WEDGE LIVES!

Not only did Rebel pilot Wedge Antilles appear in all three classic trilogy films, he survived every battle — making him a cult figure among fans who shared their love on early internet newsgroups like alt.fan.wedge. The X-Wing novels finally made Wedge a star player. Written by Michael A. Stackpole, the books put Wedge at the head of the legendary Rogue Squadron during the invasion of Coruscant and the hunt for renegade Imperial

warlords. Three installments (*Rogue Squadron*, *Wedge's Gamble*, and *The Krytos Trap*) came out in 1996. A total of nine X-Wing novels (four written by Aaron Allston) appeared before the series' retirement in 1999.

CONJOURING THE PHANTOM!

After years of rumors, work on the Star Wars prequels began in 1996. The story, centered on a young Obi-Wan Kenobi and an even younger Anakin Skywalker, remained shrouded in secrecy, but behind the scenes Doug Chiang led a team of concept artists in sketching George Lucas' visions.



THE BIG EVENT

STAR WARS SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

April, 1996

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE DEBUTS!

It was the movie without a movie. Thirteen years after the release of *Return of the Jedi* — and three years before the debut of the prequel trilogy — Lucasfilm capitalized on the surging interest in Star Wars by telling the story of what happened between Han Solo's carbon-freeze in *The Empire Strikes Back* and his thaw in *Return of the Jedi*. All the pieces of the Lucasfilm licensing empire came together to chronicle "Episode five-and-a-half," leading with a novel and comics, while rounding out the year with a video game for the new Nintendo 64.

Each release told a different part of the story, providing a multilayered, movie-style tale without the movie. With Han Solo on ice, smuggler Dash Rendar took center stage, helping Leia, Luke, Lando, and Chewie hunt for Han while battling the scheming Prince Xizor. Action figures, an original soundtrack, vehicles, figurines, roleplaying materials, trading cards, and a making-of book all combined to make *Shadows of the Empire* not just a story, but a multi-media event.

1996

REAL LIFE ENTERTAINMENT

MARCH 25:

Braveheart, the story of Scottish hero William Wallace (starring and directed by Mel Gibson) wins Best Picture at the 68th Academy Awards.

MAY 14:

Doctor Who, a made-for-TV movie starring Paul McGann as the eighth Doctor, premieres on the U.S.'s FOX network.

JUNE:

The Nintendo 64 gaming system is released in Japan, with a North American release following in September. The N64 replaced the company's previous console, 1990's Super Nintendo.

JULY 4:

Blockbuster alien invasion movie *Independence Day* is released, quickly becoming the top-grossing film of the year.

1996: MONTH BY MONTH

JANUARY: *Tales from Jabba's Palace* is published. This collection of short fiction, edited by Kevin J. Anderson, told the stories of Ephant Mon, Salacious B. Crumb, and other loathsome minions.

FEBRUARY: Dark Horse Comics releases issue #5 of *X-Wing Rogue Squadron*, part one of the four-part "The Phantom Affair." Garpeous artwork by Edwin Blukovic makes the story arc a fan favorite.

MARCH: Luke Skywalker searches for his birth mother in Michael P. Kube-McDowell's *Before the Storm*, the first novel in the Black Fleet Crisis trilogy. The object of Luke's focus proves to be an imposter, sidestepping any conflicts with the upcoming prequel films.

APRIL: Steve Perry's *Shadows of the Empire* hits bookstores, the crest of a multimedia wave including toys, comics, music (everything but a movie).

MAY: Novelist Kathy Tyers contributes the short story "Only Droids Serve the Maker" to issue #10 of the *Star Wars Adventure Journal*, a quarterly publication featuring original fiction and roleplaying source material.

JUNE: West End Games releases the *Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook*, a roleplaying guide to the characters and settings of the *Shadows of the Empire* universe. Written by Peter Schweighofer, the sourcebook doubles as an encyclopedia for non-gaming fans of the Expanded Universe.

JULY: Preview issue #0 of *Golden Age of the Sith* appears. The new comics series takes place 5,000 years before the events of the movies.

AUGUST: *Shadows of the Empire* merchandise can be found on toy shelves everywhere. Offerings include MicroMachines replicas of the major vehicles, as well as action figures of Xizor, Dash Rendar (both above right), and Chewbacca (disguised as the Wookiee bounty hunter, Shooovv).



SEPTEMBER: Pre-production work finally begins on *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*.

OCTOBER: The New Republic scrambles to contain a plague outbreak on newly-captured Coruscant in *X-Wing: The Krytos Trap*, a novel by Michael A. Stackpole.

NOVEMBER: The first-person shooter game *Star Wars: Dark Forces* is released for the PlayStation gaming console, following a successful PC launch the previous year.

DECEMBER: The *Shadows of the Empire* video game appears for the new Nintendo 64 console. The game allows players to control Dash Rendar and battle enemies including IG-88 and Boba Fett. ♫

BIG
INTERVIEW

STAR WARS
THE FORCE
UNLEASHED





MARIS:

A NEW BROOD OF HERO

The Force Unleashed videogame features a raft of new characters, prime among them mysterious Jedi warrior Maris Brood. Actress Adrienne Wilkinson talks about the technical and creative challenges of working on the newest *Star Wars* adventure.

Words: Paul Simpson



There's a new Jedi on the scene, and she's fighting for her very survival in a universe where every man, woman, and creature may be against her. She's Maris Brood, and she's one of the stars of the new Star Wars videogame, *The Force Unleashed*.

Maris Brood is brought to life for the game by former *Kenai: Warrior Princess* star Adrienne Wilkinson, whose credits include *The Sopranos*, *Road to Respect*, and *Scobby Doo 2*. In those games, only her voice accompanied the animators' vision of the character. However in *The Force Unleashed* it's Wilkinson herself who forms the physical basis for the character, thanks to a new motion capture technique used by LucasArts.


Wilkinson wasn't expecting the voiceover job that came her way in November 2006 to be

anything out of the ordinary. The secrecy wasn't surprising, since she was used to working on *Ronin* properties, but there was one curious aspect. "Unlike most voiceover jobs, they needed a headshot photo, and the producers wanted me to audition in person, instead of just on tape," she recalls.

When she went to the audition, the producers showed her animatics from the game and concept art for the character of Maris Brood. "It turned out that they were looking for people who could voice the characters as they wanted them, but could also physically manifest those characters as well."

While not every character in *The Force Unleashed* is animated in this way, a handful were chosen to go through the entire process, and Wilkinson counts herself lucky to be among





them. "I was in their first batch of auditions, and they've told me since that they knew immediately I was the right person, because they thought I resembled the concept art and could really bring the character to life. It was one of those great meetings where everything jelled."

PULLING FACES

A couple of months went by before the audition process for other key parts in *The Force Unleashed* was complete, and Wilkinson began her work in February 2007. She regularly returned to LucasArts' base at the Letterman Digital Arts Center in San Francisco's Presidio to add to those initial sessions. "They were finessing the storyline and figuring out more of the battles and the details," she says. "The first session I was in San Francisco for about a week, while for some of the others I was there a bit longer. Every couple of months, they would come back to us and have more pieces done that we would perfect."

Wilkinson was awed by the sheer scope of the project. "All of the voice work was done in this amazing studio," she explains. "It was very high tech, and they captured every piece of it on film so they could see how we were moving."

The most unusual part for Wilkinson was when LucasArts' technicians began taking some very odd photographs. "We had to make very strange, but very specific faces," Wilkinson says. "With the combination of looks, they're able to capture every single one of the muscles in your face. When they input it into the computer, they can show how your face and musculature would react under different circumstances—so if there was something they missed, it realistically could be created and look completely legitimate. Then I had to sit in a machine and be completely still while they took a 340° digital image. It was so detailed. They got everything from each hair to skin pores."

With additional information gleaned using traditional motion capture techniques—much "data" applied all over actors' suits for detailed computer tracking—the final images were truly massive renditions of the cast. LucasArts' attention to detail seemingly knew no limits. "Because they were so intent on detail, they took actual photos of the insides of all

THE FORCE UNLEASHED

mouths and meshed them with our characters!" Wilkinson says. "Apparently, the skeletal structure is so important that if the teeth aren't set right in the computer, the face will look a little off."

Although it sounds grueling, Wilkinson says that it was fun. "It was relaxed, because they're fun guys," she laughs. "They know what they're doing, and they were getting to play with this new technology. Everyone is very talented in their particular creative field, so I was working with a bunch of geniuses, which was quite cool." The atmosphere, she adds, was helped by the fact that "everyone who works for that company is in their dream job. They've been wanting to work for Lucasfilm since they were children. To be around people living out their dreams was refreshing!"

THE SECRET APPRENTICE

Wilkinson estimates that during the entire process she worked with about 70 different people—quite a change from a normal voiceover job, where an actor doesn't have that much contact with the game makers. "Because of the technology involved, there were probably 400 people working on the project," she says. "My character has small horns, so I was working with a man doing prosthetics, along with the 20 people who were working the high-tech cameras, and the motion capture people. There were all kinds of groups working with this amazing new technology, making sure it would live up to their expectations."

In most voiceover jobs, actors record their lines separately—quite often in different studios around the world—which then are combined in the editing suite. If





They're lucky, they might get a recording of one of their colleagues' previously-recorded tracks to react to, or at least get guidance from the director. Not so on *The Force Unleashed*. "I was up at the Presidio with Sam Witwer, who plays Starkiller, the secret apprentice, and Natalie Cox, who plays Juno Eclipse," Wilkinson says.

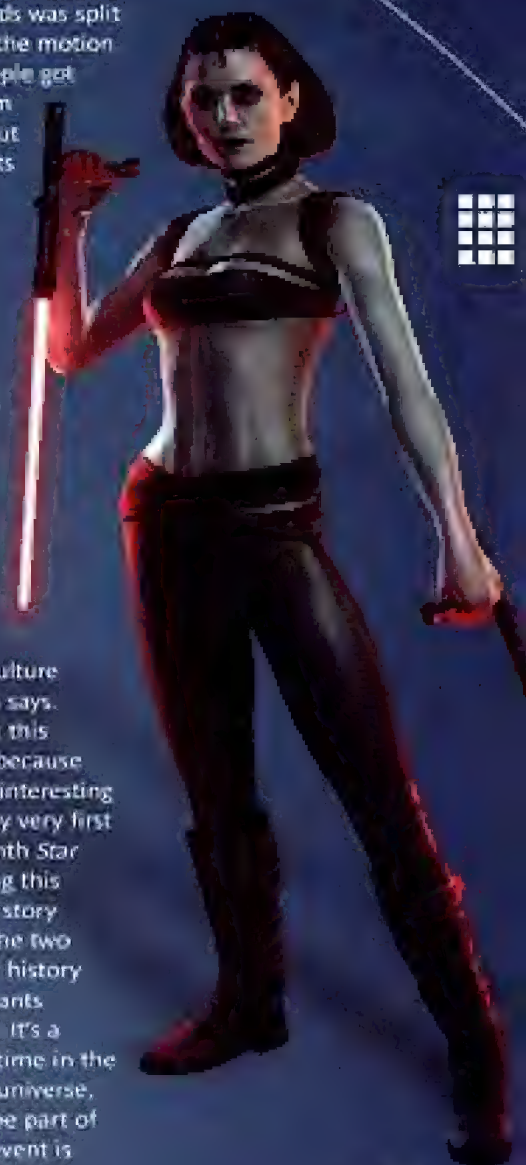
"We did the motion capture process at the same time. All our scenes were done together, but only one of us would be on camera at a time, with the others acting opposite them."

The creation of the characters afterwards was split between the animation department and the motion capture people. "The motion capture people got the shoulders up, and the animation team took care of our bodies," she explains. "But even those were based on our movements from what they filmed and the motion capture. They took additional photos of us in varying fighting poses."

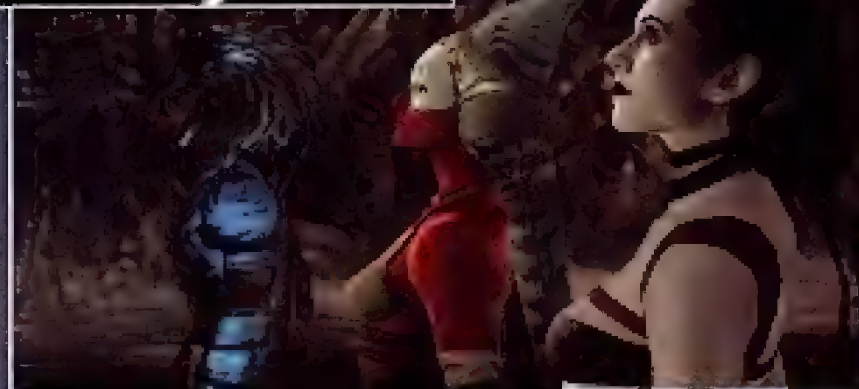
Although the backgrounds and costumes were created digitally, the cast did have some costuming and props. "We wore things that hinted towards our characters, both to help us with our roles and to help the animators see things a little bit," she says. "We didn't do entire fights, but we would act things out, so we would be holding a lightsaber hilt and adopt stances and postures. We didn't break into full choreography!"

WHO IS MARIS BROOD?

"I grew up with *Star Wars*, and the pop culture of it has been part of my life," Wilkinson says. "I am extremely excited to be involved in this project, both because it's Lucasfilm and because it's something new. One of the most interesting parts was when they told me at my very first audition that instead of a seventh *Star Wars* movie, they were doing this game. It tells part of the story of the time between the two trilogies—a piece of history that everybody wants to know about. It's a tumultuous time in the *Star Wars* universe, and to be part of that event is pretty cool."



THE FORCE UNLEASHED



There are so many things that pop off from it to tell the rest of the story, with a novel and a graphic novel."

The actress laughs when she's asked just who is Maris Brood. "The truth is I will be excited as everybody else when the game comes out to figure out exactly what my story is!" she admits. "It's like working in film and TV. I have no idea what they've edited. I don't know how much of my story remains, or if they've been able to expand on it."

Maris Brood is a female Jedi, "and as anyone who knows about the Star Wars universe can tell you, it's a really scary time to be a Jedi." Having survived Emperor Palpatine's Order 66, Brood is simply "trying to survive."

Wilkinson says of her character, "She has lots of different dimensions to her and does things that might go against her conscience. But in the end, she'll do what she has to in order to survive. It makes her a complicated character, which I like. She's not just good or bad. She's trying not to hurt anybody more than she has to, but she can definitely take care of herself, and if it comes down to it, she will stand her ground. She's trying to get through day by day without dying and without losing her mind."

Even Brood's weaponry is unusual. "She has two lightsaber tonfas [ancient weapons, known in fantasy as guard staves], which is a first in the Star Wars universe," she says. "Even if I was not directly involved with the game, she's an awesome character I would be drawn to. She's assertive and interesting. Her background and history are really compelling to me. I have no idea how much of her story will be revealed in the game and how much in other media."

Along with game-hungry Star Wars fans, Wilkinson was eagerly awaiting the release of The Force Unleashed and looked forward to fan reaction to Maris Brood. "She's one of the coolest characters I've seen recently in the Star Wars universe, and I really hope people will take to her as much as I did." ♡





DATABANK

Like Asajj Ventress, Maris Brood was found by a member of the Jedi Order as an infant and trained during the Clone Wars on the starship *Gray Pilgrim*. She and her Master escaped Order 66 as a result of their isolation. Seeking information on galactic events, her Master vanished, but not before Brood learned of the fall of the Jedi and Vader's role in the rise of the Empire. Seeking revenge, Brood gained the tutelage of Jedi Master Shaak Ti, who drew her back from the dark side. Hiding in the forests of Felucia, Brood imprisoned Senator Bail Organa during his attempts to build the Rebel Alliance. After battling Vader's secret apprentice Starkiller, Brood escaped but the shadow of the dark side hung over her.

PROFILE

HOMEWORLD: UNKNOWN

(POSSIBLY IRIDONIA)

SPECIES: ZABRAK

GENDER: FEMALE

WEAPON: GUARD STOTOS

AFFILIATION: JEDI, GALACTIC REPUBLIC

SKILLS

Again like Ventress, Brood's Jedi training was disrupted. As a result she never learned the discipline necessary to becoming a Jedi. Unlike Ventress, she has resisted the lure of the dark side, despite being involved in several doubtful ventures. Skilled with her weapons, Brood lacks the cunning of Ventress and she is more sympathetic to those around her.

STRENGTH	70
SPEED	70
POWER	30
LEADERSHIP	60
MOBILITY	80
LOYALTY	70
SPECIAL ABILITY	70
BONUS SKILL	70

MARIS BROOD

They're both orphans whose training remained incomplete due to tragedy. However, they turned out to be very different people.

Where Ventress turned unequivocally to the dark side, there remained within Brood a source of light that prevented her from falling to darkness entirely, no

matter how severe the temptation or provocation. Confused by events in the galaxy, Brood found it difficult to pick sides, so decided to look out for the one person who mattered the most to her: herself.

Meeting in battle, Ventress and Brood would certainly put on a powerful display of lightsaber skills and



DATABANK

Count Dooku's most-trusted assassin, Asajj Ventress deeply wished to become a Sith even though she was never an official apprentice. Well-trained in the arts of lightsaber dueling and Force manipulation, she had to remain hidden for some time from Dooku's master, Darth Sidious. Cunning and cruel, Ventress would entrap and play with her opponents before dispatching them. She engaged in conflict with both Skywalker and Kenobi, but neither could beat her, just as she could not vanquish them. A lifetime of cruel hardships had given Ventress a hard-edged confidence, a cold heart and a fierce survival instinct.

PROFILE

HOMEWORLD: RATTATAK

SPECIES: RATTATAK

GENDER: FEMALE

VEHICLE: GEONOSIAN FANBLADE STARFIGHTER

AFFILIATION: CONFEDERATION
OF INDEPENDENT SYSTEMS

SKILLS

Trained by Jedi Ky Narec, the orphaned Ventress quickly absorbed Jedi ways until Narec was killed before completing her training. Her raw, unfocused power in the Force was allowed to develop without the discipline of the Jedi, fueling her instinctual fury. Turning against the Republic, Ventress became a ruthless killing machine, further increasing her dark side abilities. A cunning military mastermind, Ventress became a key figure in the Separatist army, doing Dooku's bidding.

ASAJJ VENTRESS

acrobatic moves. Both are very physical fighters who'd be equally matched, although Ventress could call more readily on her dark side powers to push home her advantage.

While Brood might lack the killer instincts displayed by Ventress, she does have an innate and powerful sense of positivity that might just see her

through. Often the overconfidence of those on the dark side can lead to them making mistakes, although the sheer power of dark side strength can be hard to resist. This would be a drawn-out dynamic battle with the ultimate victor unclear until the very last moment!

Turn to page 79 to see who triumphs!

80
80
20
60
80
50
80
60

STRENGTH
SPEED
POWER
LEADERSHIP
MOBILITY
LOYALTY
SPECIAL ABILITY
BONUS SKILL

Words: Calum Waddell



BREAKING THE MOLD

VISUAL EFFECTS WIZARD KEN RALSTON GOT HIS START IN THE MINIATURE AND OPTICAL EFFECTS SHOP AT ILM DURING THE MAKING OF *A NEW HOPE*. HE HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE, AND TAKES A LOOK BACK WITH *INSIDER* AT HIS WORK ON THE FIRST *STAR WARS* TRILOGY.

Ken Ralston began his galactic career at ILM as an assistant cameraman on the miniature and optical effects unit of *Star Wars: A New Hope* before becoming effects camera operator for *The Empire Strikes Back* and finally working on visual effects for *Return of the Jedi*. Following his *Star Wars* success, ILM hired him to supervise the effects on three back-to-back *Star Trek* movies (beginning with 1982's *Wrath of Khan*), assisting in the creation of yet another classic sci-fi universe. Boasting four Oscars on his resume, Ralston is now one of Hollywood's premiere visual effects technicians, with recent credits including *The Polar Express* in 2006 and *Beowulf* the following year.



This spread: Animating models was a key part of Ken Ralston's work.

Where did your interest in visual effects come from?

I used to go see movies by Ray Harryhausen when I was a kid. Watching his work is really where all of this started for me. I was also reading *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. I even wrote some letters to [Editor] Forry Ackerman. I went to his house once, and Ray was actually there. It was through them that I made acquaintances with people who remain good friends of mine, such as Dennis Muren, who of course went on to do outstanding work on *Star Wars*. And I ended up getting a job out of all this! A couple of us made an 8mm film called *The Bounds of Imagination*. It took us a year to do. It was 45 minutes long and filled with visual effects. However, it was Dennis who ended up getting the script for *Star Wars*. Dennis called me a few months later to join him. No one really knew what it was! I said, "Sure, why not?" I was taking a leap into the unknown.

You ended up working on what, for its time, was a fairly expensive film. It's funny that you should say that because compared to now it's nothing. "Gee, they did the whole movie for what? It was only \$9 million?" [The final cost ended up over \$11 million.] I didn't care what it cost, quite frankly. It's not as if we were throwing money

away. We were working pretty hard. And trying to do it as fast as possible. Everything leading up to actually doing the effects, especially building the motion control systems, was expensive. Everybody was doing it for next to nothing, anyway. It was not a fancy thing to work on. We were in an older industrial area of LA, inside an old cinderblock building doing the special effects. When you compare that to what ILM has turned into now! Holy cow! So I didn't really worry what was being spent. I was just trying to do a good job.

Did you work closely with your friend Dennis Muren on *Star Wars*?

Yes, I was working with Dennis on the entire shoot. We had our own group. We were mainly on the night crew and we had too much to do and too little time. All of the cameras were going 24 hours a day. We didn't see too many other people at night, which helped keep our minds on the project.

Did you work on the final X-wing assault on the Death Star?

I did pieces of that. When I look back on it I think, "Man, that was really simple to do!" Back then it wasn't simple; it was really difficult! We did a lot of the X-wings flying in and out of the trenches and the laser cannons blasting. We were trying to get all of that to work visually. It was a nightmare because, along with George [Lucas], we were breaking new ground.





Dennis Muren has said that *The Empire Strikes Back* presented a far larger challenge than *Star Wars* and that, at first, he had no idea how to accomplish the effects.

Empire was definitely a much more varied and challenging film. Filming the Imperial walkers—and all of the miniatures and stop-motion that went with them—that was difficult. We were combining them with snowspeeders. That was tough to achieve in that bright white environment with the old optical printers available to us. No one had tried to show this kind of thing on film before. I also did a lot on the space scenes. I tried to make them a lot less locked down than they were in *Star Wars*. I attempted to add more character to it, to break the mold with

regards to how some of the ships flew around—a bit different from *Star Wars*. That was a great deal of fun.

Did you work closely with Irvin Kershner on *Empire*?

For the visual effects guys, we worked mainly with George, even on *Empire*. I think *Empire* is the best of the original trilogy. Kershner did a stupendous job on that film; real storytelling, excellent directing, and a lot of very complicated shots. I love the movie. Forget the fact I worked on it; I think that it looks great and is fantastic entertainment. For us, George was always leading the charge. Nothing was just tossed into *Empire*. Every special effect leads the characters through an important

"I got a call to join *Star Wars*. No one really knew what it was! It was a leap into the unknown."



STAR WARS
VISUAL EFFECTS
MAGAZINE

"I didn't really care what was being spent. I was just trying to do a good job."

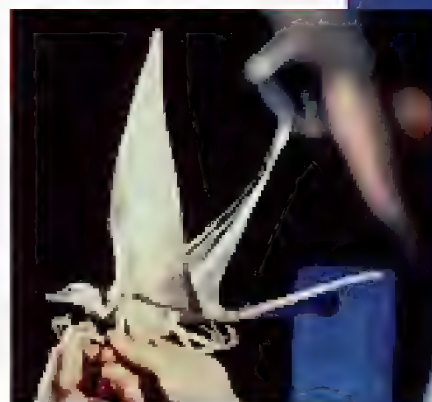
journey. That made it easier for me to work on it. I like to have a real idea of what the shots are supposed to do and say. The great thing about George was that he gave you a lot of flexibility, despite the fact there were very precise things that had to be done.

On *Jedi*, for instance, I had a lot more freedom on all of the space battle stuff. George liked a lot of what we were doing. If George trusts you, he just lets you do your thing.

Were you able to suggest your own visual effects ideas to George Lucas? Oh sure! That's something I have always done with directors. They are just ideas, so directors can take them or leave them. George was usually ready to listen to other people, though.

By the time of *Return of the Jedi* were you assigned to work on specific parts of the movie? On the earlier films we were asked to help out on some of the shots that other people were doing but, generally,

that didn't happen on *Jedi*. I was doing most of the spaceship shots on *Jedi*. The technology had improved enormously by then. Our ability to use it had improved by leaps and bounds as well. *Star Wars* was an incredibly awkward film to make, but once the technology became second nature, it was a much easier experience. Each film was another leap forward when it came to how the special effects looked. Because of that, George could get more of what he wanted. For *Star Wars*, there was a lot of stuff we just couldn't do, and that frustrated George. By the time of *Jedi*, the technology had improved, and the understanding of the movies was better. George had a lot more freedom in designing the shots the way he wanted them to look. So *Jedi* was pretty simple, much more than the previous two. The time spent shooting the models was less drawn out. We worked faster. I had a lot of fun and crazy memories from *Jedi*. It was a good, lively shoot.



The Force was with them! Members of the crew—one of the first audiences to see *Star Wars*!



Ralston also brought to life various creatures, including the Twi'lek.



“George was always leading the charge. The great thing about George was that he gave you a lot of flexibility. If George trusts you, he lets you just do your thing.”

When the time came to go from a Star Wars movie to a Star Trek movie, was it difficult to switch from one fantasy world to another?

Not really. I was deliberately not making any comparisons between the two series. I put my *Star Trek* brain on and just went about my business. Luckily I had learned a lot from *Star Wars* by the time I got the job on the *Star Trek* films. It was an interesting experience because I started on *Jedi* working in the monster shop with Phil Tippett, designing the creatures. Then I did all of *Star Trek II*, then went back and finished *Jedi*. That tells you how long that one went on! 🍌



PACKED FULL WITH ALL THE LATEST STUFF FROM THE **STAR WARS** UNIVERSE

**STAR
WARS**

BLASTER



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DISCOVER THE
TRUE STORY OF
THE GALAXY'S
'HUNK OF JUNK!'



STAR WARS COLLECTING 62 ♣ **BOUNTY HUNTERS 70** ♣ **ASK LOBOT 58**



"THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A GOOD BLASTER AT YOUR SIDE, KID"

BOOKS

JAMES LUCENO FILLS IN THE HISTORY OF A VERY FAMOUS FREIGHTER WORDS: JASON FRY

THE FASTEST HUNK OF JUNK IN THE GALAXY!

We first see the *Millennium Falcon* when Luke Skywalker does—and have to agree with his appraisal of her as a piece of junk. Sure, we've heard that the saucer-shaped ship made the Kessel Run in impressive time, but the oily, pitted freighter in Docking Bay 94 looks like it could barely travel 12 parsecs, let alone set speed records. Yet Han Solo soon backs up his boasts about her, outrunning Imperial Star Destroyers and taking on first TIE fighters and then the Death Star. The *Falcon* proves worthy of his praise, but where did the freighter come from, and how did it become full of surprises, from those deep smuggling compartments to its outsized guns?

In *The Empire Strikes Back* we learned a bit more—Lando Calrissian owned the *Falcon* before losing her to Han under somewhat murky circumstances. Most recently, we saw her on-screen for a moment in *Revenge of the Sith*, landing at the Senate Building as Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi arrive to meet with Coruscant's politicians.

So how'd the ship get from the center of the galaxy to Tatooine? And what adventures did she see along the way? Veteran *Star Wars* chronicler James Luceno offers some of the



answers in *Millennium Falcon* (Del Rey, \$26), the history of a famous freighter wrapped up in the tale of a treasure hunt.

Han and Leia Organa Solo are raising their granddaughter Allana, the daughter of Jacen Solo and the Hapan queen Tenel Ka. When Allana finds a strange device aboard her grandfather's beloved old ship, Han and Leia decide to investigate the freighter's history. They don't know the device dates back to the *Falcon*'s flight to the Senate building, or that her captain on that ill-fated mission has been revived after years in medcenters—and is

trying to find out what happened to the ship he knew as the *Stellar Envoy*.

While Tobin Jada traces the *Falcon*'s history forward from the final days of the Republic, the Solos trace it backwards before Han won it from Lando. But they're not alone—pirates, crime lords, and a slimy intergalactic

lawyer or two are also determined to discover the *Falcon*'s long-buried secrets.

In Luceno's hands, the *Falcon* comes alive through a succession of names, owners and adventures. There's galactic entrepreneur Cix-Trouvee, circus hand turned pet-show organizer Vistal Purn, and others. Readers will come to know the *Falcon* in such incarnations as the *Fickle Flyer* and the *Second Chance*, among others, and see her emerge on the right and wrong side of scrapes in Hutt space, the backwater worlds of the Greater Javin, an Imperial impound lot, and elsewhere. Before Luceno's done, the ship has taken the stage as a character in its own right.

"Objects become imbued with power when they are associated with memorable experiences or pivotal phases in our lives," Luceno says, adding that "all these decades later Han and the *Falcon* have become inseparable and somewhat indistinguishable."

BOOKS continues next page...



ASK LOBOT



CLOUD CITY'S COMPUTER LIASON
OFFICER ANSWERS ALL YOUR
STAR WARS QUERIES.

AS RELATED TO LELAND V. CHEE



Was there more than one dianoga on the Death Star and were the creatures used on the Death Star II?

Sally Lopez, Kentucky

Though dianogas have been used intentionally throughout the galaxy for waste disposal and as a food source, the dianoga that attacks Luke in the Death Star's trash compactor has been described in the EU as an unwanted guest. Dianogas are common throughout the galaxy, found both planetside and aboard capital ships. Though there have been no other reports of dianogas on the first or second Death Star, it's certainly possible, if not likely, that their presence was never discovered or that those other stories simply haven't been told. Besides, what are the chances that our heroes just happen to stumble upon the one trash compactor in the entire Death Star that has a dianoga in it?

ASK LOBOT

BOOKS continued...

In some sense the *Falcon* is a reflection of Han: a scoundrel of a ship, but agile beyond measure and lucky beyond belief. And as Han learns in the book, the *Falcon's* history is every bit as varied and textured as his own."

In chronicling the Solos' adventures, Luceno bows to a complication sometimes glossed over in *Star Wars* fiction: the Solos and their starship are celebrities known from Aduba to Zettros, leaving regular galactic civilians star-

"I wanted to show that the *Falcon* had an impact on the lives of everyone who piloted it through a span of just over 100 years."

struck. "Han and Leia are a bit like the Brad and Angelina of the *Star Wars* universe," Luceno says wryly. "By now they would be recognized immediately on most principal worlds, and disguises wouldn't always do the trick. They are forced at times to move about in a bubble of isolation that safeguards their lives and ensures their privacy."

In a departure from some Expanded

Universe tales, the fate of the galaxy isn't at stake in *Millennium Falcon*. Yes, Han and his family face considerable danger, but this time the plans of chiefs of state and Jedi Masters are a backdrop for a more intimate story.

Luceno calls working on a smaller narrative stage "the proverbial breath of fresh air—it allowed me to focus on characterization more than grand events, and kept me from having to have each line of dialogue read like an oracular pronouncement. Even though *A New Hope* plays with big ideas, I still think of it as

a bunch of characters and two droids who get caught up in world-shaking events."

Luceno says Lucasfilm's Leland Chee and Pablo Hidalgo came up with the idea for the book independently, and it passed muster during a Lucasfilm brainstorming meeting. Luceno considered the idea of an anthology, but decided that the *Falcon's* Episode III cameo "could set the stage for a full-fledged

THROUGH THE MAKER'S EYES

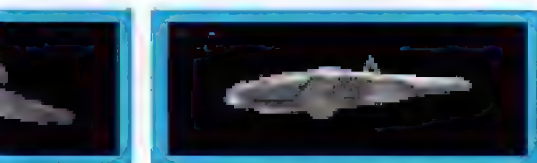
It's far too simple to say that *Star Wars: Frames* is a set of six books in a special case. After all, that case is made of gorgeous, hand-inlaid maple, and it's adorned with sculpted reliefs of Yoda and Darth Vader, and the six 11" x 22" handsomely bound books it contains tell the story of *Star Wars* through more than 1,400 oversized frames from the movies, selected personally by George Lucas and printed in gorgeous color at an incredibly fine resolution that rivals film stock. The result is a salute to the cinematography of *Star Wars*, as seen through the eyes of its maker and assembled in a way that allows a reader the time and space to absorb the

craft of Lucas and his incredible crew.

Without the distractions of narrative text or commentary, *Frames* presents *Star Wars* as a six-part silent movie, with the composition of shots and the interplay of light and color standing in for words in presenting the story of Anakin Skywalker and his family. Think of it as the *Star Wars* epic as a sort of visual memoir, told by Lucas through the medium of his own craft.

Frames is published by Insight Editions, which specializes in limited-edition fine-art books. It isn't cheap—it'll set you back between \$4,000 and \$5,000, depending on when you order,

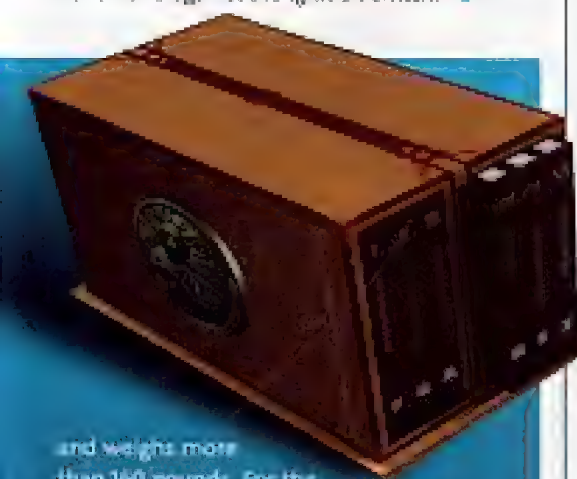




novel, in which several separate stories could be incorporated."

Luceno is one of the deftest hands at incorporating previous novels and Expanded Universe material into his new narratives, and says he greatly enjoyed the research the novel required. But he notes that "I wanted to avoid rehashing the *Falcon's* 40-year history with Han by having the ship serve the needs of smugglers and soldiers exclusively, so I took the liberty of creating a series of backstories about the individual owners. Principally, I wanted to show that the *Falcon* had an impact on the lives of everyone who piloted it through a span of just over 100 years."

Personal history played a role, too. "My earliest thoughts about the *Falcon* go back to when my late collaborator, Brian Daley, was commissioned to write a trilogy of novels about Han and Chewbacca," Luceno recalls. "We had long talks about the ship, and would compare the *Falcon* to the hunks of junk both of us were driving at the time. Even now, I drive an '85 Toyota 4Runner that occasionally needs to be persuaded to start with the slam of a hand against the ignition switch." ☺



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COMICS

VECTOR—THE YEAR-LONG *STAR WARS* CROSSOVER—ROARS TO ITS CONCLUSION IN *STAR WARS LEGACY* WORDS: JASON FRY

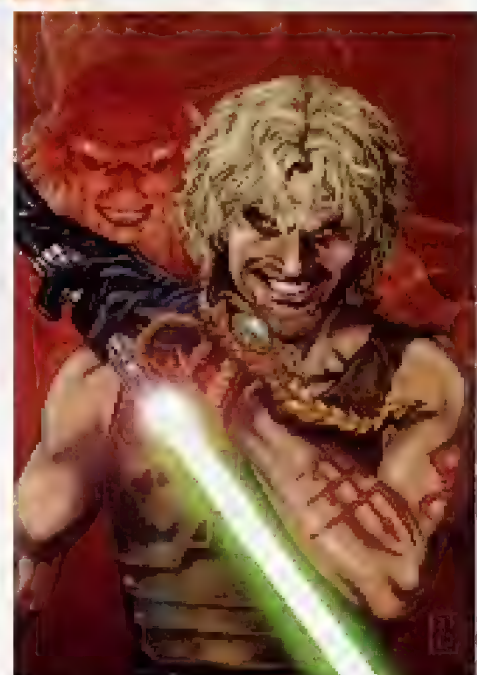
CLIMAX AND CONSEQUENCES

This has been the year of "Vector"—a 12-part crossover tale running through all of Dark Horse's ongoing *Star Wars* titles: *Knights of the Old Republic*, *Dark Times*, *Rebellion*, and *Legacy*. For the first time, a single storyline united all the major *Star Wars* eras, beginning in the ancient past and moving to the classic trilogy. Now, with *Legacy*, "Vector" ends with a bang in *Star Wars'* near future.

The "Vector" saga has its roots 4000 years before the films, when the Sith artifact known as the Muur Talisman fell into the hands of the young Jedi Knight Celeste Morn. Infected by its evil essence, Celeste became a conduit for the long-dead Sith Lord Karness Muur. She used dark sorcery to control innocent humans who had been transformed into fiendish rakghouls, and placed herself in suspended animation that lasted for millennia. Celeste survived until the time of Anakin Skywalker's earliest years as Darth Vader, then met Luke Skywalker nearly two decades later as "Vector" continued its run. "Now she's in the *Legacy* era," says writer John Ostrander, "and hey—there's another Skywalker! It's our boy, Cade."

The common thread of "Vector" has been Celeste Morn, so part of *Legacy's* job is to show how sharing a body with a Sith Lord has eroded her mind. "Celeste detests the Sith, and for all these millennia she has been stuck with one inside her head," says *Legacy* artist Jan Duursema. "Her body is Muur's prison, but she is also his prisoner. Nothing short of death can part them. She wants to give up the Talisman, but she doesn't believe anyone else is strong enough to contain Muur without succumbing to the darkness of his presence. She knows how easy it would be to listen to Muur, to fall to the dark side and become like him. Will she become a victim of destiny, or its master?"

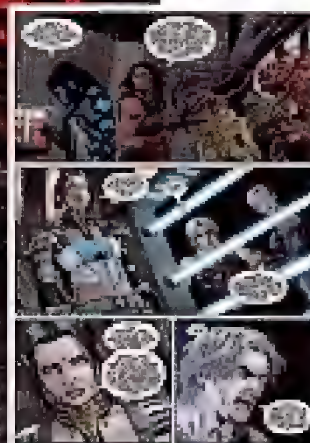
All this intrigue takes place against a rich



backdrop of revenge and revolution, as Cade Skywalker plots his own, one-man return of the Jedi. Most of the galaxy in this era is under the boot-heel of Darth Krayt, a dark side dictator who ordered the massacre of the Jedi and seized the reins of the new Empire in a bloody coup. Celeste Morn and the Muur Talisman play a key role in Cade's ultimate plan to assassinate Krayt. Unfortunately for the Skywalker bloodline, this generation of the family tree doesn't seem too concerned about falling to the dark side.

"Cade wants Krayt dead," says Ostrander. "Krayt is a thorn in his side—putting bounties on him, threatening anyone who is close to him. Cade is not going to spend the rest of his days running. Krayt's death benefits Cade, and it benefits the galaxy—Cade sees it as a good thing all the way around, and he's not above using the dark side as a tool. Folks

COMICS continues next page...



ASK LOBOT



Why is it that A-wings and B-wings are not able to carry an astromech droids onboard the fighters?

Kevin M. ...

Whether starfighters are fitted with an astromech is a design choice. A-wings are design purely for speed and thus the astromech socket was removed for space and weight considerations. Instead of astromechs, B-wings are fitted with advanced computers to handle the complex computational duties needed to fly the unwieldy craft. It's worth mentioning that for the *DIC Complete Cross Sections* book, the writers entertained the notion of adding an enclosed astromech socket in the B-wing rear, but it was ultimately decided that starfighter astromechs should always be visible from the outside.

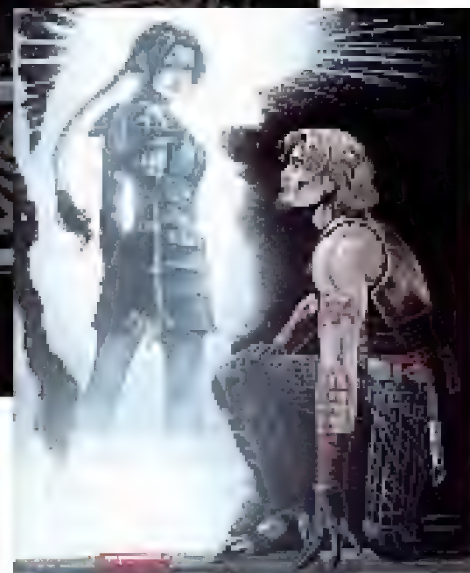
ASK LOBOT

COMICS continued...

keep trying to tell him that it's not a good idea—we'll the Sith tell him otherwise—but the boy just don't listen too good!"

Ostrander and Duursema took the "Vector" assignment not as a distraction or sideline, but as a way to enhance their long-term plans. "Since our arc of 'Vector' was coming in at the end of the year, we took it as an opportunity to take what we had already planned and spin it full-force into the project," says Duursema. "This is also the climax of 'Vector' overall, so we didn't have to worry about handing it off to anyone else. Since it ends here, we've been able to sync it with our storyline and Cade's plan to assassinate Krayt. Celeste and the Muur Talisman are the keys, but on which side will they ultimately wind up? Depends who's calling the shots—Celeste or Kamesh Muur."

So what's next after "Vector"? Look for more political unrest in *Legacy's* future galaxy as rival factions—including the government-in-exile led by deposed Emperor Roan Fel, and the rogue anti-Sith forces of the Galactic Alliance Remnant (heirs in spirit to the classic trilogy's Rebel Alliance)—jockey for position in a rapidly-changing power structure. For now, at least, Ostrander is tight-lipped on the major surprises in store for 2009. "It depends on how successful Cade's mission [to



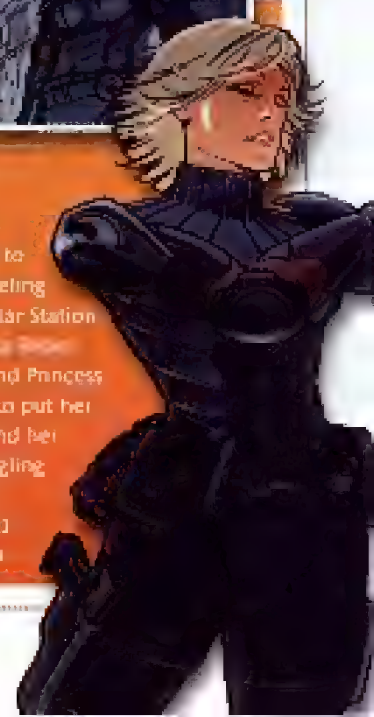
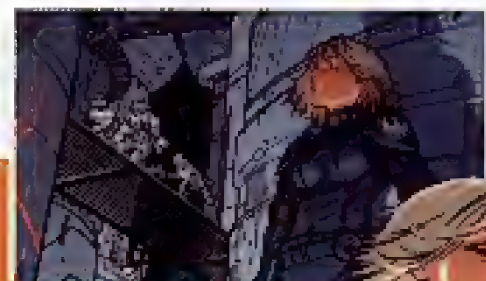
assassinate Krayt] is," he says. "He is headstrong, reckless, and caught up in a dark side fight between two powerful Sith Lords, battling forces beyond anything he has ever known. What happens next depends on who survives!"

SUICIDE MISSION

THE REBEL ALLIANCE FACES IMPOSSIBLE ODDS IN *STAR WARS: REBELLION VOLUME 3—SMALL VICTORIES*

Late November sees the release of *Small Victories*, the third collected volume of the ongoing *Star Wars: Rebellion* comic series. Written by Jeremy Barlow with art from Colin Wilson, the trade paperback tells the story of Rebel Alliance lieutenant Deena Shan, a fresh-faced recruit who begins to doubt her place in the fight against the Empire after several *disappointing* *missions* *abandon* the cause, she is instead

thrust into a spur-of-the-moment suicide mission to destroy the Imperial refueling and resupply hub Bannistar Station. *Fighting alongside* *Rebel* *heroes* *Luke Skywalker* *and* *Princess Leia Organa*, Deena has to put her crisis of conscience behind her as she finds herself struggling for her life! The 96-page volume collects issues #11-14 of *Star Wars: Rebellion*.



COLLECTING

FOR OVER 30 YEARS, *STAR WARS* LUNCH BOXES HAVE REMAINED THE BEST PLACE IN THE GALAXY TO STORE YOUR PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH AND CARTON OF BLUE MILK. WORDS & PICTURES: GUS LOPEZ



THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH BOX!



In the late 1970s King Seeley Thermos, the leader in character lunch boxes, issued the very first *Star Wars* lunch box. That first pail was a metal box with unique artwork depicting an X-wing and TIE fighter space battle scene on one face and the stormtrooper "Move along" scene with Luke, Ben, and the droids on the other side. Much to the delight of collectors, this first box is also the first variation. The rarer, first version of this box came with simple starfield artwork along the sides. The second version was updated to include new character artwork on the side panels. Both designs came bundled with a plastic thermos bottle—a tradition that continues with most *Star Wars* lunch boxes through to today.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s metal lunch boxes were considered safety hazards by some parents, and demand for the classic metal lunch box began to fall. King Seeley catered to both camps with two different plastic *Star Wars* boxes for the U.S. market. One featured artwork with Darth Vader and the droids, and the other had a unique "Design Your Own *Star Wars* Lunch Kit" concept with a blank plastic box for kids to apply decals to their own custom design.

"MAY THE BOX BE WITH YOU"

Elsewhere in the world, Thermos created two varieties of plastic lunch boxes for the Canadian market using artwork similar to that on the metal boxes from the U.S. One of the most obscure and prized *Star Wars* lunch boxes was the 'bento box' sold by Sakura in Japan. Bento boxes are traditionally designed to hold food like noodles, sushi, and sashimi, and the *Star Wars* box came adorned with the images of two sushi-loving droids, C-3PO and R2-D2.

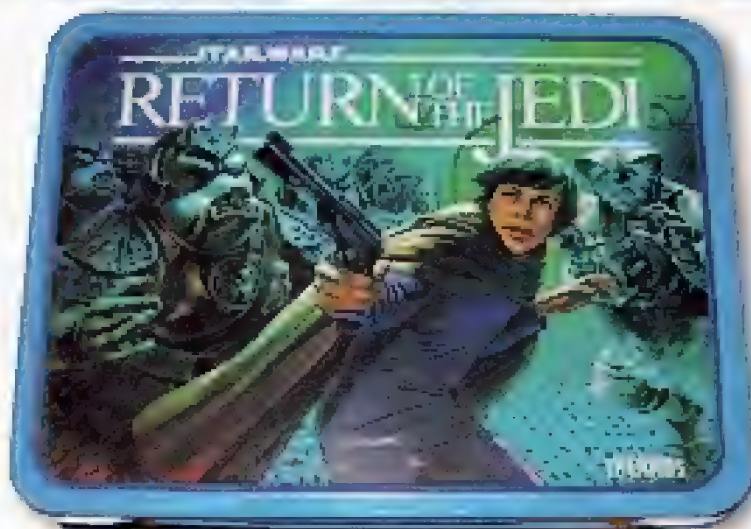
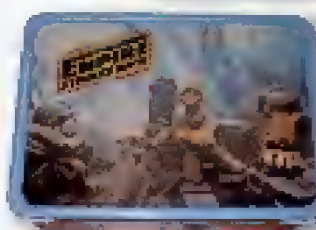
For *The Empire Strikes Back*, King Seeley Thermos expanded its line to create two different metal boxes for the U.S. market, one with vivid original artwork with scenes from *Empire* such as the *Falcon* cockpit scene with Han, Chewie, and Leia, and a different box with photo images from the second film in the saga, including a Hoth stormtrooper behind a laser cannon. King Seeley also offered two plastic boxes in the U.S., one in Canada, and two in the United Kingdom.

King Seeley's *Return of the Jedi* box continued the tradition of striking painted imagery, with a Star Destroyer orbiting the Death Star over Endor along one face and Luke confronting Jabba on the other. The same artwork was used for a blue plastic *Return of the Jedi* box in Canada.

"I FIND YOUR LACK OF LUNCH DISTURBING"

Condition and completeness are critical to value in lunch box collecting. Those early *Star Wars* metal lunch boxes climb significantly in price if found free of paint chips and dents. These boxes damage easily, and most were carried back and forth to school, so finding one in mint condition can take years of hunting, regardless of price. Most of the early lunch boxes came with a plastic thermos including a cap that served as a cup. They were sometimes also bundled with paper inserts that are extremely difficult to track down considering few boxes were saved in an unused state.

Star Wars lunch boxes didn't end with the original trilogy. King Seeley continued with *Droids* and *Wicket the Ewok* boxes for the cartoon series, which are popular today with collectors of those lines. Pyramid, Thermos, Spearmark, and Zak Designs made plastic and vinyl lunch boxes for the *Star Wars*



COLLECTING continues next page

In the company of men — and droids.



ASK LOBOT

Is there an in-universe explanation as to where the alien Rebels are during the medal sequence at the end of *A New Hope*?

Lucy Helmore, Toronto, Canada

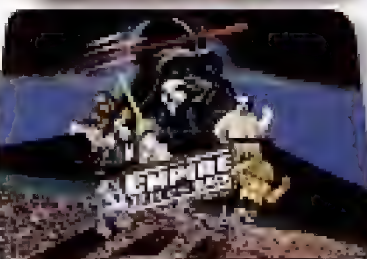
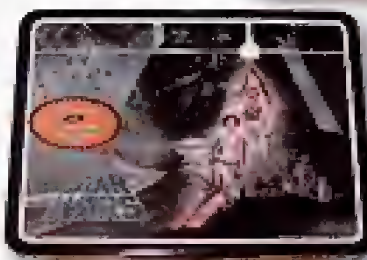
Not only that, where are all the female personnel? Perhaps they're with the Rebel fleet that we also don't see in *A New Hope*. In the hangar, we only see fighters, not the capital ships. If the Rebels had capital ships available, you'd think they would have started an evacuation of the Rebel base just in case the Death Star was able to squeeze a shot off. This certainly beats the real-world explanation that it was much easier (and cheaper) to film with the extras and costumes they had on hand during the chase.

STAR WARS COLLECTING continues...

prequels. With advances in graphic products, just about every character from Episodes I-III had their own lunch box design including clone troopers, Jango Fett, Darth Vader, Yoda, Sebulba, Qui Gon, Anakin, and even Jar Jar, Meesa hungry.

In recent years, retro metal lunch boxes have come back in style to satisfy collector nostalgia. One of the first in this category was an *A New Hope* retro box issued by Thermos with the "Style A" poster artwork. At the same time, Thermos also produced a metal box for the release of *Attack of the Clones*. Hallmark got into the act with holiday ornaments based on the vintage *A New Hope* and *Empire* lunch boxes, and also made half scale replicas of the original vintage boxes from the first three movies.

There are even parody *Star Wars* lunch boxes. The apparel retailer Big Dogs produced two pun-laden lunch boxes titled "The Empire Bites Back" and "EpaWisode I: The Panting Menace," which are popular with the hordes of fans into artwork of dogs in familiar *Star Wars* poster montages. One of the rarest *Star Wars* themed lunch boxes is *Hardware Wars*, planned for release by Exclusive Collectibles. Ironically, this lunch box, based on the first parody film that poked fun at the *Star Wars* universe, may have the last laugh as one of the scarcest *Star Wars* lunch boxes ever made. Few samples of this box are known to exist as the box was never available for sale to the public.



In *A New Hope* when Obi-Wan cuts off the arm of one of the people in the bar it shows blood. Then in *Empire*, *Phantom*, *Clones*, and *Sith* when a person gets a limb cut off there's no blood. Why is that?

Byron Vance, via Internet

The question of the cauterization abilities of the lightsaber has always been a source of confusion, but it's a question worth repeating, especially with added information from Episode III. Let's look at all the evidence from the films.

Episode I: Qui-Gon is impaled by Maul's lightsaber; no blood. When Obi-Wan cuts Maul in half, there's a quick spray of blood during the cut, but no blood when the body fell down the reactor shaft.

Episode II: Jango is decapitated by Mace and Dooku; severe Anakin's arm; no blood. But when Dooku slashes Obi-Wan in the arm and leg, there's a little blood.

Episode III: Anakin cuts off the head and hands of Count Dooku; no blood. No blood when Palpatine cuts down Mace or when Anakin cuts off Mace's hand. No blood when Obi-Wan cuts down Anakin on Mustafar.

Episode IV: When Obi-Wan slices off Ponda Bape's arm, there's a trace of blood from the severed limb. Obviously no blood (or body, for that matter) when Vader stomps down Obi-Wan.

Episode V: When Luke cuts off the wampa's arm, no blood in either the limb or the wampa body. When Han slices open the tauntaun carcass, we get guts, though no blood. When Luke's hand is cut off by Vader, no blood.

Episode VI: None of victims of Luke's lightsaber show any blood.

In conclusion, though there's a general rule about lightsabers cauterizing wounds, the films are always going to allow room for exceptions. So I don't have a concrete answer, but any excuse to run through all the gory bits of lightsaber carnage spanning the saga is always gonna be worth it.

ASK A ROBOT

TOYS

VADER IS HERE. LEGO OFFERS THE CHANCE TO RE-ENACT *THE CLONE WARS*, AND MIMOCO'S USB DRIVES PACK A PUNCH.

MUST HAVE!

SIDESHOW 12-INCH A NEW HOPE DARTH VADER

Finally.
Early next year.
\$124.99.
*Nuff said.

SOMETIMES THE GOOD GUYS DON'T WEAR WHITE....

Efficient, tactical, and obedient, the Imperial stormtrooper is the foreboding face of the Emperor's will. Sideshow's beautifully rendered, ultra-articulated 1/6-scale figure comes packed with accessories including a black bodysuit, a full set of detailed armor complete with helmet and belt with holster, a thermal detonator with clip, multiple interchangeable hands, a standard issue Imperial blaster, and a display base emblazoned with the Star Wars logo. The exclusive version comes with a unique blaster pistol. The Imperial stormtrooper will go on sale in the fall for \$89.99.

SIDESHOW REBEL FLEET TROOPER 12-INCH FIGURE

The Rebel troopers may have gotten trounced by the Empire in the beginning of *A New Hope*, but this detailed 12-inch figure boasts over 30 points of articulation and comes with a full outfit—including shirt, vest, pants, and boots—a blaster with holster, helmet, interchangeable hands, and a display base. It will be available towards the end of the year for \$69.99.

TOYS continues next page...

REPUBLIC FIGHTER TANK

LEGO's TX-130S Republic fighter tank comes with two movable laser turrets, an elevating gunner seat, hidden wheels, and flip-out missile launchers, as well as two clone trooper mini-figures. This 592-piece set is a Walmart exclusive and retails for \$49.99.



DROID GUNSHIP

The 329-piece Separatist droid gunship set boasts retractable landing gear, an opening cockpit, wing-mounted laser cannons, blaster turrets, and drops bombs with the turn of a gear. This Target LEGO exclusive includes three battle droid mini-figures and will retail for \$29.99 when it goes on sale in October.



SEPARATIST SPIDER DROID

A Toys 'R' Us LEGO exclusive, the Separatist spider droid set comes with four poseable joint legs and moveable laser cannons, and includes Commander Fox, clone trooper, battle droid, super battle droid, and battle droid commander mini-figures. It will sell for \$29.99.



THE TWILIGHT

It's been called a flaptrap and a grease bucket, but after Anakin Skywalker uses his tinkering talents to upgrade and modify this beat-up spice freighter's systems and takes the helm, it's got it where it counts. LEGO's 882-piece Twilight set includes retractable landing gear, wings that switch from landing to flight modes, swiveling laser turrets, firing missiles, a side-mounted escape pod, and a working tow-cable. This Toys 'R' Us exclusive comes with Anakin Skywalker, Ahsoka Tano, R2-D2, and Rotta the Huttlet mini-figures and retails for \$89.99.

STAR WARS MIMOBOT SERIES 3

The Emperor, Royal Guard, Wicket, and C-3PO are the newest additions to Mimoco's line of USB flash drives. Each one comes loaded with digital content like wallpapers, screensavers, icons, and avatars, and plays actual sounds from the Star Wars films when inserted or ejected from your PC.



BOUNTY HUNTERS

KOTOBUKIYA

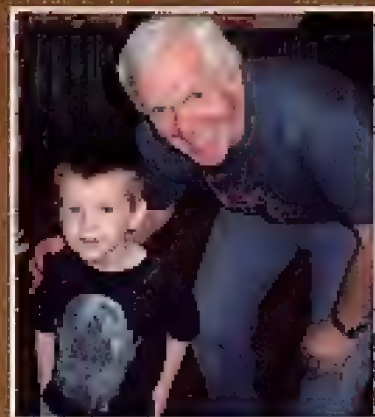
MEET THE STARS, SHOW THE EVIDENCE, WIN THE BOUNTY!
INSIDER'S BOUNTY HUNTER SECTION IS SPONSORED BY
KOTOBUKIYA. EACH WINNER WILL RECEIVE A FANTASTIC
KOTOBUKIYA STAR WARS STATUE, WORTH AROUND \$100!



DICING WITH THE DARK SIDE!

I was lucky enough to attend an Episode III DVD release press preview at Skywalker Ranch and both Hayden Christensen and Ian McDiarmid were there doing interviews. I got to speak with Hayden, who was really easy to talk to. Ian was very cordial, even though he had just flown in from England.
Robert E Bean, Stockbridge, Georgia, U.S.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM THE FOLLOWING BOUNTY HUNTERS:



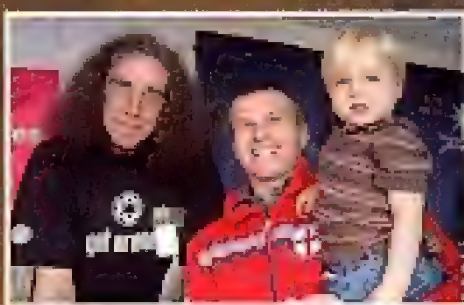
BOBA MEETS HIS MATCH

My son, daughter and I attended a Star Wars convention in Plano, TX and had the pleasure of meeting many of the stars. My son's favorite was Jeremy Bulloch. On his autograph he wrote "Seth... You're next!"
Sean Fuller, Edmond, U.S.



THE GENIAL GENERAL

My wife Kim and son Connor joined the thousands of fans at Celebration IV. I would like to thank everyone involved for a wonderful experience. The event staff and volunteers were great. Likewise, the celebrities were very polite and very cordial to my six-year-old son offering autographs and photos no matter how long the line was or how long they had been signing. A personal favorite of mine was Julian Glover. I cannot tell you how pleasant he is. He went out of his way to make our experience enjoyable.
Kevin T. Chermesky, Archbold, U.S.



HARRISON AND PETER (AND DAN)!

I was lucky enough to meet Peter Mayhew at The Bath and West Show in England during May 2008. My son Harrison was thrilled! Even though he is named after Mr. Ford, Chewbacca is his favorite character. Peter was more than willing to stand for the photo and show us how tall he is even though he said his knee had been acting up over the last few days! He was very friendly and was keen to talk about the 501st Legion of which I am a member (TK6617).
Dan Williams, Somerset, England

CAN YOU GO ONE BETTER?

DO YOU KNOW NATALIE PORTMAN? HAVE YOU HUNG OUT WITH HARRISON FORD? MAYBE YOU'VE SEEN SAM WITWER? WE WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTOS!

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36

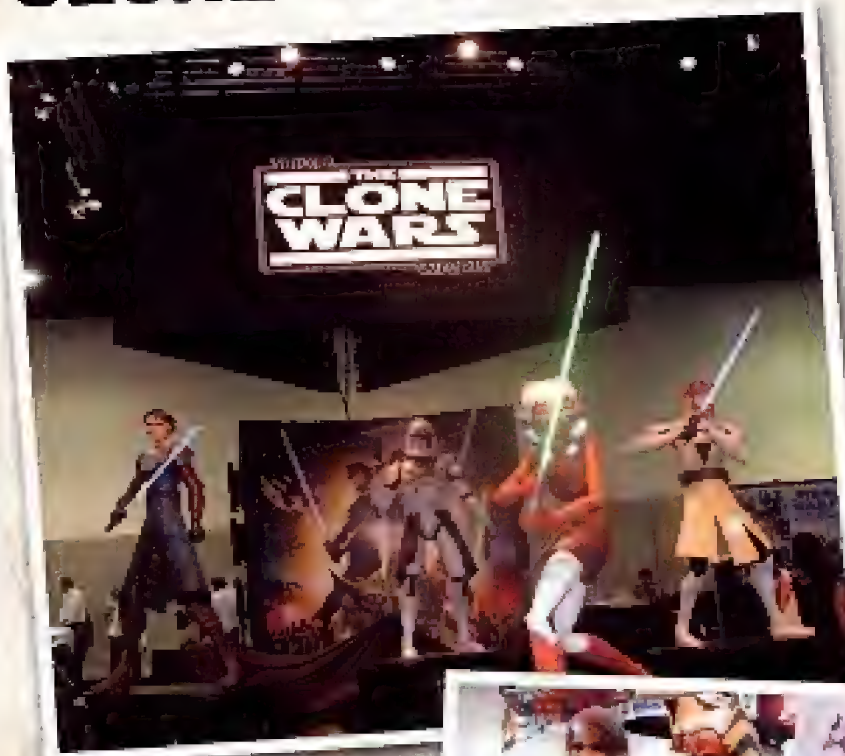
BANTHA TRACKS

BY THE FANS.
FOR THE FANS.

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL FANS AND CLONE WARS RULE!

San Diego Comic-Con International might have been originally organized to promote comic arts, but now it promotes entertainment arts of all kinds, from comics to television to the big screen. Since 1976 Lucasfilm and the *Star Wars* movies have had a great relationship with Comic-Con. *Star Wars* has traditionally been prominent on the exhibit hall floor and in programming, with Fridays usually designated as "Star Wars Day."

This year the Lucasfilm Pavilion was the center of activity for *Star Wars* fans at the show, featuring full-sized figures from *The Clone Wars* animated series, hours of *Star Wars*-related footage on multiple screens, visits from Ahsoka Tano, the *Clone Wars* Formula One race car, new games from LucasArts, shopping at StarWarsShop, and great displays and products from a number of Lucasfilm licensees.



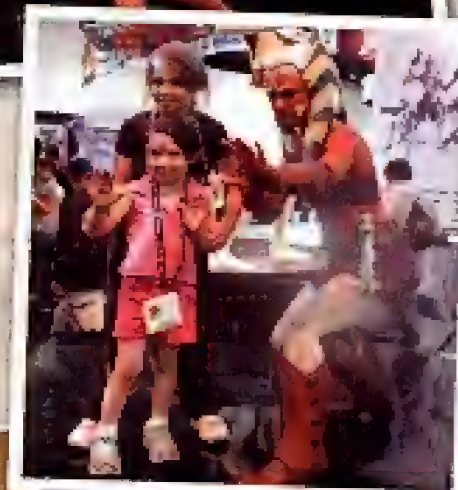
BANTHA TRACKS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Any original art, envelope art, comics, illustrations, notes, stories, meeting information, or any materials voluntarily submitted become the property of Bantha Tracks. No compensation will be given for voluntary submissions, and there is no guarantee of publication. Submissions will not be returned. Each submission must include the creator's name, age, contact

information, date the work was created, and a statement that the work is original, created by the person submitting it, and that the person is a member of the Official *Star Wars* Fan Club. Send electronic files to banthatracks@starwars.com, or send your snail mail to Bantha Tracks, c/o Mary Franklin, P.O. Box 29701, San Francisco, CA 94129.



RIGHT: Ahsoka Tano, the new hero in *The Clone Wars* animated series, made special appearances Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at Comic-Con. Photo by David Iskra.



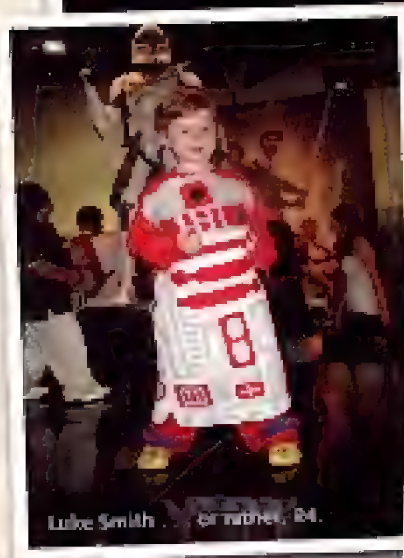
GET IN TRACKS!



LEFT: Gigi Hewitt stole the show in her "Princess Vader" costume. Who knew a Sith Lord could be so cute?



ABOVE: Fan costumes gathered informally on the Clone Wars stage in the Lucasfilm pavilion, and were the hit of the show with kids of all ages.



Luke Smith, 8, or rather, 14.



Photo by David Nikra

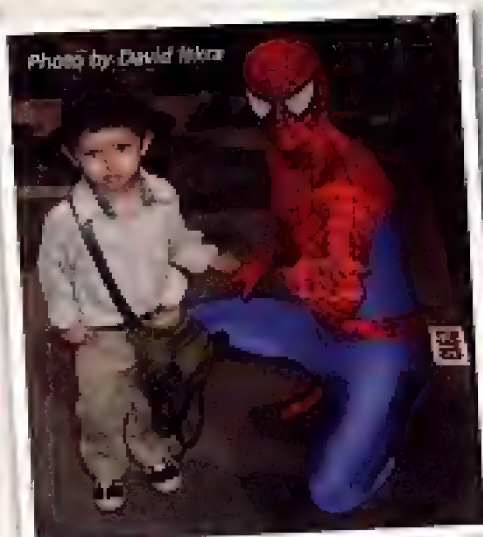


Photo by David Nikra



Gavin and Luke Wilson with their free Rex masks, given out in the Star Wars pavilion. Photo by Trisha Wilson.

LEFT: "Luke, I am not your father." Young Luke Wilson poses with the Sith Lord. Photo by Trisha Wilson.

Jeremy Wilson and family enjoyed the 2008 Fan Movie Challenge Awards at Comic-Con. Photo by Trisha Wilson.



FAN MOVIE
2008
CHALLENGE

EDITORIAL

BY MARY FRANKLIN

50+ WORDS

TRAVELING TROOPS (PART TWO)

Star Wars Celebration Japan and San Diego Comic-Con International offered two huge reasons for Star Wars fans to travel – sometimes halfway around the world – to enjoy the festivals and meet their friends from different locales.

At both events I saw fans who traveled from far away to join the fun. Many members of the 501st and Rebel Legions also journeyed to the shows, and rather than relax they joined their local Legion members for hospital visits, fundraisers, and staffing the fan tables at the shows.

Members of my Elite Squad of volunteers also made the trips, some of them working hard at both Celebration Japan and Comic-Con International. My special thanks to each of you who worked at one or both shows. As always, there's no way these great experiences for fans could happen so smoothly without you. You are truly the hyperdrive for these events!

San Diego Comic-Con International (Names in bold = both Celebration Japan and Comic-Con): Larry Barraza, Jonathan English, Chris Gereke, Christine Knapp, Cindi Manning, Lisa Alba, Jason Ambrozaitis, Barbara Arbues, Thomas Brink, Kenneth Burke, Debby Dragoo, Fen Eatough, Mitch Eatough, Jesse Hallmark, Dan Hamman, Sam Hornedo, Helen Howerton, Matt Kirk, Karen Louie, John Schlosser, Caitlin Shindler, Rogue Shindler, Tim Steff, and Slawomir Stojanowski. Additional thanks to the members of the 501st Legion who suited up to greet people at the Fan Movie Awards.

Get in Tracks!
Mary Franklin
Editor, Bantha Tracks



Comic-Con International was the setting for the 2008 Fan Movie Challenge Awards. This year's winners were Best Parody: *Star Wars Grindhouse: Don't Go in the Endor Woods* by Michael Ramova; Best Comedy: *Paraphrase Theater: Tarkin and Friends* by Will Carlough; Best Make-up: *Contract of Evil* by Lou Klein; Best Short Subject: *The Empire Strikes Back in 60 Seconds* by Oliver Jones; Best Animation and Audience Choice Award: *George Lucas Hip Hop Awards* by Mark Minckiewicz, Kay Minckiewicz, Jimmy McInerney, and Jason Swank; Best Visual Effects: *RvD2: Ryan vs. Dorkman 2* by Michael Scott and Ryan Wieber; George Lucas Selects Award: *Padmé* by Robert Reeves. For more coverage of the 2008 awards go to starwars.com. Photo by David Iskra; Photos not otherwise credited by Mary Franklin



GET IN TRACKS!





EPISODE III
REVENGE OF THE SITH
 [DVD CHAPTER 24]



WHAT THEY SAID

Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi)

"What's been interesting about [being in *Star Wars*] has been that very little has changed, to my relief. A lot of the baggage that could have come along with it worried me.

However, the nearer I got to getting the part, the more I wanted to do it. I went with my gut. I love being in the films. The only big thing that's changed is that children have seen me act, whereas I don't think they'd seen the films I'd made up to that point. Kids come to talk to me about *Star Wars* and ask me how my lightsaber works."

Cinema Confidential, www.cineconf.com

Matthew Wood (voice of Grievous)

"Rick McCallum had sent out casting packages all over LA, Sydney and London. Every time we had got a new batch of auditions in, I would process and name them and send them up to George for evaluation. By about the 30th audition I thought I would take a crack at it. I put mine in with a batch of 30, under an anonymous name... and he picked it! I remember being scared when Rick called me asking for the name of the "A.S." audition that George picked. I had submitted all the auditions just with initials. I told him I would get back to him on that tomorrow. I slept on it and wondered if I should try to get out of this situation somehow, maybe thinking I had crossed the line. The actor part of me was excited... The next day I called Rick and told him the news... he was surprised that it was me and asked if I wanted to tell George. I said "Yes!" George didn't even blink an eye and came down and recorded with me the next day. Because I was on the sound crew I could watch George's thought process evolve with the character. I had inside information I suppose. There was also the matter of deciding on a process for the character... should it be pitched low? Should it sound metallic?"

Interview by Mark Walters, biglanboy.com



OBI-WAN SHOOTS GRIEVOUS

REVENGE OF THE SITH 2005 [SCRIPT]

123 EXT. UTAPAU- SECRET LANDING PLATFORM-DAY

Extending from the wall of a small sinkhole is a secret landing platform with a small [Trade] Federation Fighter sitting in the middle of it. OBI-WAN and GENERAL GRIEVOUS race out of the tunnel system and onto the landing platform.

OBI-WAN yanks on the staff, then jumps off his LIZARD onto the General's scooter, knocking both warriors to the ground. GENERAL GRIEVOUS pulls out a laser pistol and fires at OBI-WAN. The Jedi reaches out his hand, grabs the General's electro-staff and spins the staff, blocking the laser bolts.

OBI-WAN charges GENERAL GRIEVOUS, swinging the staff and hitting the Droid in the stomach, knocking the gun away. GENERAL GRIEVOUS is hit by the staff, and the Force bends his forearm. He pulls OBI-WAN close to him, and they engage in a furious fight. The electro-staff is knocked away. The two engage in hand-to-hand combat. OBI-WAN struggles to avoid the deadly blows of the brutal, unstoppable Droid.

GENERAL GRIEVOUS's stomachplate is loose. OBI-WAN grabs it and rips it off, revealing the alien life form's guts encased in a bag in the Droid's chest. GENERAL GRIEVOUS grabs OBI-WAN, hoists him over his head, and tosses him across the platform. OBI-WAN dangles off the edge of the platform. He clutches the rim, trying to hold on. The DROID then grabs the staff and charges OBI-WAN. At the last second, OBI-WAN reaches out his hand and uses the Force to retrieve the Droid's laser pistol.

The JEDI fires several blasts in the stomach area of the alien Droid, and he EXPLODES from the inside out. The smoldering Droid falls to the ground. OBI-WAN has killed GENERAL GRIEVOUS. He pulls himself up onto the platform and walks by the destroyed carcass.

OBI-WAN: So uncivilized...

OBI-WAN brushes himself off. He throws the pistol onto the platform, picks up the electro-staff, and jumps on BOGA. The trusty beast rears up and takes off into the tunnel system.

WHY IT'S A CLASSIC

Obi-Wan Kenobi goes man-to-cyborg with General Grievous... and wins! Coming just after their lightsaber confrontation [which Kenobi seemed to relish, too] and the Boga-and-bike chase, the vicious hands-on fight sees Kenobi turn the General's seeming strengths against him. After some blows from the electrostaff, Kenobi pries apart the General's armor, exposing his vital organs. The coup-de-grace comes in the form of two blaster bolts, as Kenobi hangs precariously from a ledge. It's Kenobi's final line that's the clincher, bringing Episode III full circle again to where it all started, with Kenobi's expressed preference for a lightsaber: "not as clumsy or as random as a blaster."

NEXT TIME: DOOKU TAUNTS OBI-WAN KENOBI

NEXT TIME....

STAR WARS - PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE!

SOLO JOURNEY!

DISCOVER EVERYTHING YOU EVER NEED
TO KNOW ABOUT HAN SOLO AS WE CHART
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ONE OF THE
SAGA'S GREATEST HEROES!

CLONE CONVERSATIONS

THE VOICE CAST OF *THE CLONE WARS* GETS
ANIMATED AS THEY TALK ABOUT THE LATEST
ADVENTURES IN THE *STAR WARS* SAGA!

HOLIDAY FUN!

IT'S THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND WHAT BETTER
WAY TO CELEBRATE THAN A TRIP TO KASHYYYK!
COVER YOUR EARS, LEIA'S ABOUT TO SING!

BEST OF 2008!

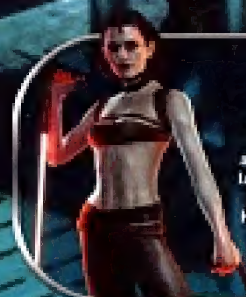
PRESENTING *INSIDER'S* ESSENTIAL HOLIDAY GIFT
GUIDE TO THE YEAR'S BEST *STAR WARS* GOODIES!

VERSUS!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SKYWALKER FACES
OFF AGAINST STARKILLER? PLACE YOUR BETS
ON THE BIGGEST BATTLE YET!

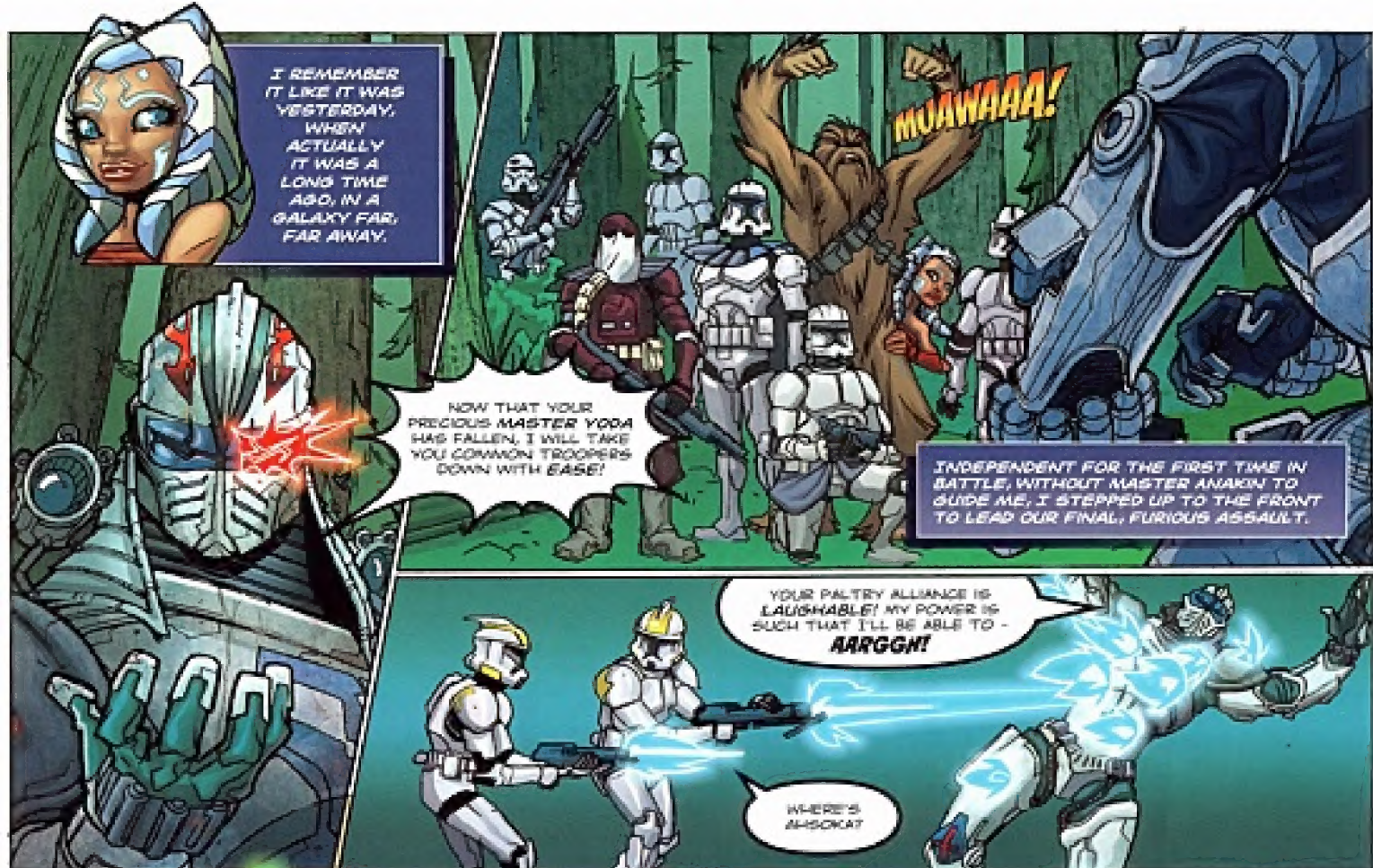
PLUS ALL YOUR FAVORITE
DEPARTMENTS AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

COMING TO A GALAXY NEAR YOU
US NEWSSTANDS: DECEMBER 16
UK NEWSAGENTS: JANUARY 1



VERSUS: WHO WINS?

A very close-run fight, with
Ventress often taking the
advantage and Brood perhaps
lacking the killer edge needed
for a swift conclusion.
However, the over-confidence
of Ventress allows the
more balanced Brood to
ultimately triumph!



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BEGIN NEW ADVENTURES WITH THE CLONE WARS STARTER SET FOR ACTION RIGHT OUT OF THE BOX, AND BUILD YOUR COLLECTION WITH 40 NEW FIGURES FROM THE CLONE WARS BOOSTER PACKS FOR BATTLES LIMITED ONLY BY YOUR IMAGINATION!

STAR WARS
MINIATURES

